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**THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SUPERIOR - SUBORDINATE  
COMMUNICATION, LMX QUALITY AND EMPLOYEE JOB  
SATISFACTION AMONG HOTEL EMPLOYEES**



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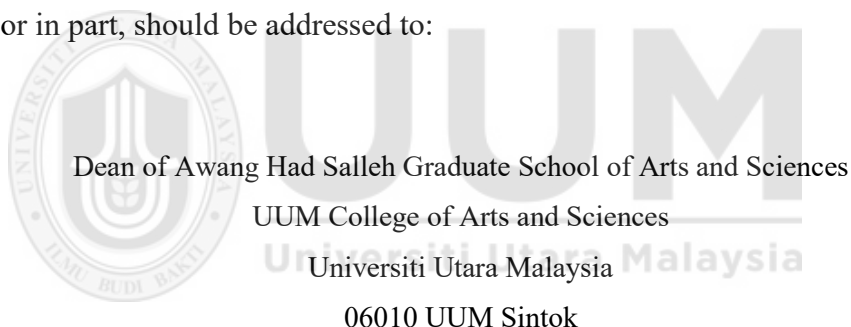
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## Abstrak

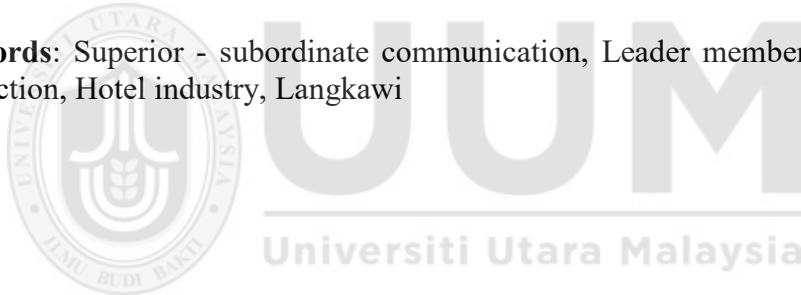
Walaupun banyak penyelidikan dalam bidang komunikasi penyeliaan, industri hotel di Malaysia masih menghadapi tukar ganti pekerja yang tinggi. Oleh yang demikian, tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan di antara komunikasi superior-subordinat dan kualiti LMX dengan kepuasan pekerjaan pekerja di hotel lima bintang di Pulau Langkawi, Malaysia. Dengan berpanduan kepada teori Leader Member Exchange (LMX), kajian ini menggunakan pengumpulan data secara persampelan rawak mudah ke atas 322 orang responden dalam maklum balas melalui kaedah soal selidik. Data dikumpul dan dianalisis menggunakan Perisian *Pakej Statistik Sains Sosial*. Kajian ini menggunakan analisis regresi berganda dan korelasi untuk menganalisis data. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa hubungan komunikasi penyeliaan dan kualiti LMX mempunyai hubungan positif yang signifikan dengan kepuasan pekerjaan pekerja. Kajian semasa menunjukkan bahawa komunikasi yang baik antara penyelia dan subordinat akan menghasilkan kepuasan kerja yang lebih baik dan fungsi organisasi yang lebih efisien. Tambahan pula, kajian ini telah mencadangkan beberapa teori dan praktikal kepada industri hotel lima bintang di Langkawi bagi meningkatkan tahap komunikasi untuk meningkatkan kepuasan pekerjaan pekerja. Hasil kajian ini akan menyumbang kepada penemuan empirikal baru di dalam bidang kajian komunikasi superior-subordinat dan kualiti LMX.

**Kata kunci:** Komunikasi superior-subordinat, *Leader Member Exchange* (LMX), Kepuasan pekerjaan, Industri hotel, Langkawi.

## Abstract

Despite the abundance of research in the area of supervisory communication, the hotel industry in Malaysia is facing high employee turnover. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between superior - subordinate communication and LMX quality with employee job satisfaction in five-star hotels in Langkawi Island, Malaysia. The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory guided this thesis, which utilized a survey to measure the opinions of the 322 respondents using simple random sampling method. Data was gathered and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were analyzed using correlation and multiple regression analysis. Results revealed that supervisory communication relationship and LMX quality have significant positive relationship with employee job satisfaction. The current study indicates that good communication between a supervisor and a subordinate will result in greater job satisfaction and better organizational functioning. Furthermore, the present study has suggested few theoretical and practical recommendations to the five-star hotel industry in Langkawi to improve the level of supervisory communication to increase employee job satisfaction. The findings are noteworthy for the industry and also contribute to new empirical findings to the literature on superior - subordinate communication and LMX quality.

**Keywords:** Superior - subordinate communication, Leader member exchange, Job satisfaction, Hotel industry, Langkawi



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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter initially introduces the background and problem statement of the study. The next section discusses the research objectives, research questions, conceptual and operational definitions, significance of the study and scope of the study. This research mainly focuses on the role of superior-subordinate communication and LMX quality how hotel employees' job satisfaction in Langkawi Island, Malaysia.

### **1.2 Background of Study**

The impact of effective interpersonal communication among managers has become a topic of interest in the literature because of the way it impacts both the employee experience and organizations. Communication form as the basic function within a managers' job scope (Greenberg, 2010) as managers spend 80% of their daily duties communicating with their team in order to drive the organization's success (Dasgupta, Suar, & Singh, 2012; Lolli, 2013). Voinea, Busu, Opran, and Vladutescu (2015) point out that supervisory communication is a tool in understanding information and management decisions in order to achieve organizational objectives. Failure in effective interpersonal communication has direct and indirect impacts on employees and organizations (Pretorius & Roux, 2011; Rudd & Mills, 2015). Superior - subordinate communication has received much attention in the organizational communication literature. This attention has focused on the influence

of the superior on their subordinate with an emphasis on achieving organizational goals and objectives (Bakar & Mustaffa, 2009).

Effective supervisory communication has been found to influence employee job satisfaction. As such, several studies have indicated that there is a need to examine effective supervisory communication in the workplace and its impact on the workforce which may cause lack of job satisfaction that can influence employee to resign (Fragouli & Ibidapo, 2015; Hsiung, 2012). Similarly, Morand (2000) highlighted that superiors within organizations spend approximately 90 percent of their day communicating verbally with others. In today's world, where technology is prevalent, the proportion of time spent communicating verbally may be lower but that does not mean that the time spent communicating with employees has declined. As an alternative, superiors are using different methods to engage with their employees (e.g., emailing and texting). Superiors are regularly having conversations with upper superiors, other subordinates and stakeholders. In light of this, it is essential for leaders to understand and realize that organizational functioning relies heavily on successful communication.

In addition to the general problems caused by the lack of effective supervisory communication, a lack of good communication skill can be perceived as a limitation of an employee's ability in performing their duties. When managers fail to clearly communicate, their employees often feel they cannot appropriately perform their duties (Puni, Agyemang, & Asamoah, 2016). The most important communication links within any organization occur within superior subordinate dyads. As the primary form of communication, a breakdown has fundamental implications for overall performance throughout the entire organization (Clampitt &

Downs, 1994). Empirical study of Jablin (1985) has revealed that one-third in two-thirds of the managers' time are spent communicating with subordinates.

Andrew and Kacmar (2001) noted that supervisory communication is one of the most salient aspects of communication for an organizational member because a supervisor plays a monumental role as information provider to his or her subordinates at various levels. Similarly, Mueller and Lee (2002) have also indicated different communication patterns in dyads between high and low levels of exchange. Furthermore, previous studies such as Kacmar, Witt, Zivnuska, and Gully (2003) and Lee and Jablin (1995) explained that dyads in high quality LMX relationships enjoy greater openness and frequency in communication, voice, feedback opportunities, attention, participation, and involvement in decision making. Therefore, the focus of communication between dyads in high quality LMX relationships changes from work-related communication to an increased sharing of relationships communication (sharing of opinions and feelings). On the other hand, Dansereau, Graen, and Haga (1975) noted that dyads in lower quality LMX relationships communication are characterized by hierarchical differentiation and the formal rules of the employment contract. This implies that in dyad relationships, subordinates' promise to their workgroup may be associated with the perceptions of supervisory communication within a workgroup.

One of the crucial outcomes of the dyadic communication is job satisfaction which is considered as one of the interesting areas to explore. For example, Kılıç, Pelit, and Selvi (2011) established that job satisfaction is related to the happiness of employees due of their jobs. High employees' job satisfaction will be valuable to



both the individual and the organization. However, Rad and De Moraes (2009) found there is a relationship between lower levels of job satisfaction with negative indicators such as high turnover rate.

The exploration for understanding the roots of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a vast and ongoing area of attention for the social scientists and managers. The apparent reality is that satisfied workers will be more fruitful, reliable and remain with the organization for longer time, whereas dissatisfied workers will be less productive and more willing to quit (Sarker, Crossman, & Chinmeteeputuck, 2003). Job satisfaction is essential not only for employees, but also for the prosperity and the success of the organization (Lim, 2008; Saleem, & Majeed, 2013). Therefore, if employees are dissatisfied with their jobs, then they will not be dedicated to their organizations and dissatisfied employees will demonstrate lack of devoutness to the organizations and might scour for other jobs (Saleem & Majeed, 2013).

With so much to be gained by retaining employees, issues of job satisfaction are becoming increasingly important in the field of hospitality and tourism where managers play an important role in improving the situation. According to the World Trade Organization (2015) the hospitality and tourism industry has one of the world's largest number of employers with 9.1% of the population working in this area and one in eleven of all available jobs being a result of this sector. Despite its size, the industry is considered to be one in which employees have high intention to leave (AlBattat & Som, 2013; Mwilu, 2016; Jagun, 2015). There are several reasons for employee turnover such as unhealthy working conditions, inappropriate

supervisory communication, low wages, work stress, and lack of career advancement (AlBattat, & Som, 2013; Hemdi, Omar & Azmi, 2012). Improper supervisory practices have also been stated to be one of the most common reasons influencing employee turnover in the industry (Haven-Tang & Jones, 2012) with ineffective managerial strategies such as poor communication practices found to be a key predictor of employee job dissatisfaction (Buzeti, Klun, & Stare, 2016) .

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The expansion of interest in interpersonal communication is not a novel topic that has been discussed particularly in the hotel industry. While it is acknowledged that there has been quite an extensive research on interpersonal communication especially during the periods of 1990s and early 2000, there is still little agreement about what exactly makes for effective communication (Punyanunt-Carter & Arias, 2016). It is worth noting that the quality of supervisor-subordinate communication is key to effective organizational operations and to employee's job satisfaction. Strong communication among superior and subordinates play a dynamic role in the success of any organizations, but unfortunately recent studies revealed that there is a lack of proper communication in many organizations in Malaysia (Chin, 2018).

The current globalized and competitive business environment forces organizations to provide customer quality service that requires motivated and committed employees. Therefore, one of the most challenging conditions these organizations face relates to long-term retention of their good employees, who are the centerpiece of providing good services. Long-term employee retention is closely related to job satisfaction and reduced turnover intentions. Employee turnover is

known to be a common problem, occurring in all types of organizations (Yin-Fah, Foon, Chee-Leong, & Osman, 2010), but it is more common in tourism industry (AlBattat, & Som, 2013).

According to Gerst (2013) communication between managers and employees act as a major driver of employee job satisfaction in the workplace. Keeping employees satisfied has become a priority for many organizations because firms get benefit when they have a satisfied workforce. Lee and Moreo (2007) have indicated employee satisfaction is a key factor to a company's success. Whereby, organizations could experience significant business costs related to the loss of employees (Huang, Wu, Lu, & Lin, 2016). The estimated cost of employee turnover is between 90% and 200% of the employee's annual salary (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez 2001). Organizations have reported the cost due to the lost investment in training and developing their employees who eventually leave regardless of the organizations' efforts (Almalki, 2012). Holtom and Burch (2016) noted that employee turnover may disrupt the workflow structure and trust among organizational members making work environment complex.

In the Malaysian context, the hotel industry is the major contributor to the country's GDP, but unfortunately this sector is facing high employee turnover. Shen and Austin (2017) revealed that one of the main reasons of organizational failure is the poor communication interaction among superior and subordinates. A good quality of superior-subordinate communication increases the level of employee job satisfaction and resulting in low employee turnover (Dugguh & Dennis, 2014).

Furthermore, tourism is a mentionable earning industry of Malaysia. This sector is selected as the second engine for the growth of the nation for developing global competitiveness. Bhuiyan, Siwar and Ismail (2013) noted that tourism industry effects positively on the Malaysian economy for increasing foreign exchange earnings, and employment opportunities. Malaysia has become one of the most important tourist destinations around the world. It contributes at least 8 to 10 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (Sivalingam, 2007). On the other hand, Alan, Radzi, Hemdi and Othman (2010) indicated that unfortunately Malaysian tourism industry is facing high employee turnover rate. This is in line with Shaari, Salleh and Hussin (2012) in their study where they agreed that the high turnover rate is a problematic issue within the Malaysian hotel industry and call for more research in this area. Therefore, this study intends to explore the dimensions of superior-subordinate communication for effective communication among hotel employees, in the hope to clarify the process of supervisory communication relating to the level of job satisfaction of the Malaysian hotel industry employees.

Based on the arguments previously discussed, effective supervisory communication has been found to be vital to job satisfaction in various contexts, thus measuring effective supervisory communication in the Malaysian tourism industry will provide leaders with a better understanding of the impact of their communication behaviors on employees' job satisfaction, which may in turn lead to improvements and a reduction in the high level of turnover rate in the industry. With a lower turnover rate, organizational productivity will improve, along with the costs associated with it. The aim of this research is to analyze the impact of superior-subordinate communication on individuals' job satisfaction. Furthermore, the results

of this study aim to identify factors of ineffective superior-subordinate communication patterns and provide solutions or suggestions for a 5-star hotel industry on improving the issues impacting employees' job satisfaction. Therefore, it is strongly believed that improving employees' level of job satisfaction will reduce turnover rates and bring prosperity in this sector.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

From the discussions presented earlier, it is apparent that there seems to be several issues relating to employee job satisfaction which require further investigations. Taking that into consideration, the present research hopes to bridge the gaps and further enhances the knowledge on superior-subordinate communication. Therefore, the following research questions are formulated and will be examined:

1. Does superior - subordinate communication influence job satisfaction among employee in the hotel industry?
2. Does LMX quality have an influence on job satisfaction among employee in the hotel industry?

#### **1.5 Research Objectives**

Based on the above-mentioned research questions it leads to the establishment of the following research objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between superior - subordinate communication and job satisfaction among employee in the hotel industry.
2. To examine the relationship between LMX quality and job satisfaction among employee in the hotel industry.

## 1.6 Significance of Study

Although there has been extensive research conducted in the tourism industry concerning a number of functional areas, such as service quality (Tsang, Lee & Qu, 2015), employee incentive strategies (Kshirsagar & Mhashilkar, 2015), organizational innovativeness (Binder, Mair, Stummer & Kessler, 2016) and job performance (Sturman & Park, 2016) but the investigation of superior - subordinate communication effectiveness is relatively incomplete. All of these human resources management practices aim to improve workplace sustainability. However, organizations neglect the importance of managers' and subordinate communication practices that determine the employees' level of job satisfaction. There is a serious communication problem affecting the level of employee job satisfaction, which negatively reduces achievement of organizational goals. White (1999) stated that "Communication is the weak link in diverse organizations and research needs to focus on facilitating both external and intra organizational communication" (p. 485).

It is important for hotel managers to acknowledge the impact of effective communication in the workplace. As has been established, communication is an important issue affecting the relationship of leadership and employees' job outcomes (Alshanbri et al., 2015; AlGassim; Qubaisi, Elanain, Badri & Ajmal, 2015), all of which determine the success of each organization, leader, manager, supervisor, and employee (Bambacas & Patrickson, 2009). For this reason, this study aims to advance the understanding of the impact of effective communication on employees' job satisfaction, especially in the 5-star hotels of Langkawi Island in Malaysia. There is a genuine need to examine the impact of superior - subordinate communication practices on the hotel industry. This need is increased in Malaysia due to an

insufficient number of employees working in the industry accompanied by a high level of turnover.

Scholars in the area of supervisory communication are very much influenced by the positivist approach especially when they adopt theory such as Leader Member Exchange Theory (LMX) in guiding their works. By studying superior - subordinate communication in Malaysia, the study poses its own significance. The knowledge obtained from this research will help and assist hotel organizations and tourism industry, government agencies, human resource practitioners, and senior or top managers to implement and manage communication approaches that promote the sustainability of employees' performance and improve the quality of employee job satisfaction. Maintaining employees' happiness is important to improve their job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and enhance productivity which in turn will create a healthy work industry (Karatepe, 2013). Having a healthy workplace is vital to the development of the industry in order to become one of the essential drivers for the Malaysian future economy.

## **1.7 Definition of Terms**

This thesis apply the use of few conceptual terms, so it is important for the researcher to define and elaborate on terms that are considered crucial to the present work. The definitions of the current study have been delineated in the following sub sections.

### **1.7.1 Superior - Subordinate Communication**

Different scholars have offered various definitions to describe superior subordinate - communication in general. For example, Jablin (1979) define superior - subordinate

communication as an exchange of information between organizational members, at least one of whom has formal authority to direct and evaluate the activities of other organizational members. Meanwhile, Pincus (1986) referred to superior - subordinate communication as a leadership communication. Superior - subordinate communication is the communication which occurs between superior and employees in the work place. The most relevant definition which is used by various scholars in the past studies is given by Miles, Patrick, and King (1996). Superior - subordinate communication behavior is operationalized as processes and interactions that have been practiced by superiors towards subordinates with the aim of achieving task objectives and maintaining their relationships. Therefore, in this thesis, superior-subordinate communication was used as the communication which occurs between superior and employees in the workplace to achieve organizational goals.

### **1.7.2 Leader Member Exchange (LMX)**

Despite the growing body of literature on the subject of leadership, researchers have given several solid definitions regarding Leader Member Exchange. Dansereau et al., (1975) defines LMX as the quality of the dyadic, work-related, interpersonal relationships between employees and their immediate supervisor. In contrast, Graen and Scandura (1987) define LMX as the interpersonal relationship between a supervisor and a subordinate. Whereas, Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) describes LMX as the quality of the dyadic, work relationship between an organizational member and his or her supervisor in terms of the interrelated dimensions of respect, trust, and shared responsibility. As for this research, LMX is defined as the quality of relationship a supervisor (leader) has with each of their individual employees (members) at the workplace.



### **1.7.3 Job Satisfaction**

Beer (1964) defined job satisfaction as "the attitude of workers towards the company, their job, their co-workers and other psychological objects in the work environment". Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". According to Robbins and Judge (2009) job satisfaction is a positive feeling about a person's job resulting from an evaluation of the job's characteristics. However, Ramman (2011) defined job satisfaction as a posture or sentimental response to job obligation as well as to the social conditions of the work place. In the present study, job satisfaction is defined as the degree of the positive or negative feeling of employees about their jobs.

### **1.8 Scope of the Study**

Despite the popularity of superior - subordinate communication and LMX, there seems to be limited research on the relationship of superior - subordinate communication, LMX quality and employee job satisfaction among hotel industry staff members. In light of the above identified problems, this quantitative study was conducted among employees of a 5-star hotel in the Langkawi Island of Malaysia, to investigate the employees' perception of job satisfaction in the hotel industry, the relationship of superior - subordinate communication and LMX quality.

### **1.9 Organization of the Chapters**

This thesis is divided into five chapters:

Chapter 1 starts with the background of the study followed by the problem statement. Based on the problem statement, the researcher designed the research questions and postulated the objectives of the studies. Next, this chapter discussed the theoretical and practical significance of the study. Finally, the scope of the study is discussed, and the chapter is concluded with the definition of key terms of the study.

Chapter 2 reviewed the existing literature related to the topic of the study. The chapter also identified the gaps in existing research. This chapter ends by describing the conceptual model of the research and explains the development of hypotheses.

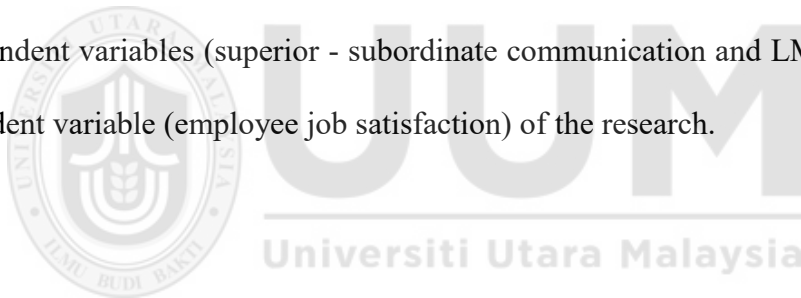
Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology and the data analysis techniques employed in the study. The research design includes the research setting and data collection procedures. In the end of the chapter, techniques for data analysis are provided.

Chapter 4 presents the findings from the quantitative methods employed. This chapter indicates the process of data screening. Then, the results of scale reliability and validity test using confirmatory factor analysis are presented. The chapter ends by showing the outcomes of hypotheses testing and modelling development. Finally, the summary of all the accepted and rejected hypotheses are given.

Last but not least, Chapter 5 presents the conclusion of the research. This chapter summarizes the results of this study and the thesis. It describes the research implications in theoretical and managerial aspects. Limitations of this research are then explained, and finally possible future research directions are discussed.

### **1.10 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, the researcher discussed a summary review of the research background and problem of statement on superior - subordinate communication, LMX quality and employee job satisfaction in the context of the hotel industry. The research questions, research objectives, significance and scope of the study are also presented in this chapter. The next chapter will further review and discuss the independent variables (superior - subordinate communication and LMX quality) and dependent variable (employee job satisfaction) of the research.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will provide a review of literature, a conceptual model, hypotheses and the underpinning theory for the current study.

#### **2.2 Superior - Subordinate Communication**

Superior - subordinate communication has been one of the most popular areas in organizational communication research. Superior - subordinate communication behaviors generally discuss the developments and communications that have been accomplished by seniors towards juniors with the intention of accomplishing job goals and retaining their affiliations (Miles, Patrick, & King, 1996). For example, effective supervisor subordinate communication is key to better organizational performance and employee job satisfaction. Better communication practices between supervisors and their subordinate helps in strengthening the level of coordination, information sharing, training and development of employees. Thus, communication will result in many improvements in organizational policies and decisions that affect jobs and their relationship (Myers, Davis, Schreuder, & Seibold, 2016).

Bakar, Mohamad and Mustafa (2007) discussed superior - subordinate communication in their study as an exchange of information between employees. This study tries to explore the Western intention on communication preferences between male and female employees in a Malaysian society. The scholars in the West recommend that male workers prefer work related communication with their

higher management that will motivate them to complete their jobs. On the other side, female workers desire relationship bonding in communication with their senior management in order to sustain long-term relationships. The consequences of this study suggested that male and female workers in Malaysia use equally persuasive and association communication in defining their work-related relationship quality with their top management. This study applied a quantitative approach and the respondents are personnel of a big non-government company and its operating in Northern part of Malaysia.

In relation to afore mentioned study, Madlock and Kennedy-Lightsey (2010) investigated the effect of subordinates' insights of supervisors' mentoring and oral ferociousness on employee and organizational consequences. Explicitly, this involved an investigation of the influence of mentoring and oral violence by a manager on their subordinates. Findings show managers who are weak in verbal communication skills, are considered as poor communicators and usually their behaviors are understood as unfriendly. Such kind of managers have problems in delivering their message properly, as a result they show aggressive behavior to the employee. Aggressive behavior of superior has negative consequences, such as employee's turnover.

In another study, Vuuren and Seydel (2007) also discussed about the direct and unintended effects of supervisory communication on job satisfaction. This study attempted to investigate organizational communication relationships among supervisory communication and organizational commitment. The research findings highlighted that companies cannot survive without good communication.

Additionally, the most significant aspects of communication among boss and employee draws to be the reaction from the manager, followed by the view of the manager pay attention to the employee. The researcher gathered responses from a famous telecommunication service by using online questionnaires. Almost 1000 emails were sent, and 457 respondents returned the survey.

Likewise, Page and Wiseman (1993) have proved that superior - subordinate communication has a significant impact on job satisfaction and impact on relationships between managers and employees. If there is strong communication bond among superior and subordinates it will strengthen the level of job satisfaction. This research explores the banking sectors to find out communication essential for better output.

Conversely, Chio, Hsieh and Yang's (2004) study has wanted to notice the connection between overall communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. Their research findings indicated that organizational communication can decrease conflict and improve overall employee job satisfaction.

Similarly, Downs (1988) claimed that communication relationship has been shown to be strong. But one important aspect has largely been overlooked, which has serious implications on organizational success, and that is the communication and relationship specifically between supervisor and subordinate. The findings from Downs' study contribute towards an improved considerate of the supervisor and subordinate communication relationship.

Furthermore, Andrews and Kacmar (2001) pointed out that for effective organizational output there must be strong flow of information from supervisor to subordinates. In a firm, managers are given much value as they were important information conveyer to their dependents at various levels. The standards of communication among supervisor and subordinates show a foremost character in the development and outcome of information, which influence overall management.

The lack of proper communication among superior and subordinates may result in poor output, while weakening organizational policies. However, Gaur and Ebrahimi's (2013) study claimed that the SSC is a very multifaceted phenomenon in which it includes several types of communication within the dyad.

Furthermore, Lee (1997) discussed the eminence of the supervisor subordinate affiliation as essential to the workers as well as the association, since subordinates find their immediate manager as the utmost preferred and best source of info on proceedings in a company. Moreover, Lee (2001) concluded that workers usually recognize their immediate supervisor as the main source of receiving information from the higher administration.

Similarly, Martin and Anderson (1996) also discussed in their study that good communication have huge impact on supervisor subordinate relationships. It also affects subordinate's emotional state towards his/her occupation and the place of work. A way of communication for example, voiced aggression shown by managers has been considered to be undesirably associated to subordinates' dissatisfaction at work and negative work-related outcomes.

Additionally, Clampitt and Downs (1994) discussed that the utmost vital communication relations within any company happen within superior subordinate dyads. Similarly, a study by Downs et al. (1995) also emphasized on the importance of SSC, as the primary means of communication. Thus, communication failure among employees has negative consequences for overall organizational success.

Yrle, Hartman and Galle (2002) suggested that managers may adopt contradictory behavior, and probably use unlike communication strategies with workers in higher quality exchange relations as compare to those in lower-quality relations. Still, it is claimed that the SSC is a very complicated phenomenon in which it includes several forms of communication (Gaur & Ebrahimi, 2013).

According to Miles et al. (1996) these four-separate SSC dimensions that can straightforwardly reveal social and working communication in superior subordinate dealings, specifically positive relationship communication, upward openness communication, negative relationship communication, and job-relevant communication.

In PRC, the typical scenarios include bosses asking for suggestions from subordinates, being concerned with them as persons, and permitting them to contribute their ideas on main decisions/issues. However, in upward openness communication, members have the opportunity to raise questions on superior's order as well as having opportunity to contradict with their superior. Other NRC includes managers scolding their subordinates and disgracing them in front of other office employees. Lastly, within job relevant communication it establishes the superior's reaction concerning employee performances; information linked to superior's



response on performance, sharing of information regarding different policies, job guidelines, work related assignments, plans, and objectives (Bakar et al., 2007; Michael, 2011; Pincus, 1986; Steele & Plenty, 2015). These four magnitudes mostly represent SSC in the association (Bakar & Mustaffa, 2008; Miles et al., 1996). These dimensions generally presented to foresee both subordinate job satisfaction and performance at work (Bakar & Rowe, 2005).

### **2.3 LMX Quality**

A high-quality bond among leader and employees is essential to employee happiness and good performance at the workplace (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Karanika-Murray, Bartholomew, Williams, & Cox, 2015). LMX theory discusses the importance of high-quality communal exchange between superiors and workforces for better organizational outcomes (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

A meta-synthesis done by Gerstner and Day (1997) shown that high-quality LMX links are consequential correlated to higher stages of job satisfaction, and organizational promise for workforce. To increase employee job satisfaction, leaders should practice good supervisory behavior among their staff. The most significant finding from the Gerstner and Day (1997) meta-synthesis was about the relationships between LMX and job satisfaction were found positive for subordinates.

Meanwhile, Liao, Wayne, Liden and Meuser (2017) emphasized in their latest study that LMX dealings can differ in terms of fineness within clusters so that employees who are employed under the supervisions of the similar boss notice and practice different sort of LMX treatment. For example, Graen and Uhl-Ben (1995)

stated that high class LMX relationship are associated to encouraging work behavior, extra-role performance, belief, and improved communication among associates, whereas lesser quality of LMX associations are categorized by lower echelons of collaboration, confidence, and support. Managers usually considered to be a vibrant means of backing for dealing with anxiety at workplace and therefore, they can impact worker attitude and their performance at work. LMX associations progress through the communication among supervisors and their juniors. Thus, sufficient support from manger at the workplace could enhance job satisfaction (Li, & Liao, 2014).

For the past 40 years of investigation on LMX, it has been discussed that LMX deliver an improved considerate of the great impression of leaders towards member behavior and styles and work-related outcomes, which are valuable for the organization, supervisors, and the work groups. Furthermore, high class LMX generally been observed to be significantly linked to better job outcomes (Michael, 2014; Walmbwa, Mayer, Wang, Wang, Workman, & Christensen, 2011); job satisfaction (Erdogan & Enders, 2007); satisfaction with superiors (Michael, 2011); and lower turnover (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

A significant number of research on LMX (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Matta, Scott, Koopman, & Conlon, 2015) greatly emphasized on the excellence of the dyadic, interactive link between the manager and subordinate. Gerstner and Day (1997) also point out that even supervisors have been showing very kind and favorable treatment with those subordinates, who are enjoying high quality LMX relationships. In reciprocal, subordinates show promising attitude and treatment upon

their supervisors by pleasing them and fetching themselves in showing extra reasonability (Michael, 2014).

Even though most of the investigation on LMX literature has given attention to employee reciprocation efforts, earlier research by Zacher, Pearce, Rooney, and McKenna (2014) recommended that high quality LMX relationships may also affect leader's reciprocation efforts. As noted by Qu, Janssen and Shi (2017) leaders develop positive behavior upon subordinates in high quality LMX relationships by establishing high quality communication relationships with them.

Michael (2011) notes that communication is considered a very esteemed commodity upon which all organizational activity is grounded. Consequently, this can enhance organizational productivity, performance and morale. A study by Cooren (2006) found support for the view that through communication exchanges, organizations are able to perform their functions effectively. Their work established a positive and significant relationship between communication exchange and the organizational prosperity. Thus, it can be concluded that communication is considered a backbone for the success of any organization.

Furthermore, Martin, Guillaume, Thomas, Lee and Epitropaki's (2016) study offered a potent prove of past research in the area of leadership. They have found an approach that explores the quality of the association between a leader and a follower (leader member exchange theory, LMX) that has been found popular. According to Dansereau et al. (1975) LMX theory, through different qualities of exchanges, leaders use to develop relationships with their subordinates. However, it is observed that employee who are in high quality LMX relationship with the supervisors are

more willing to put in the efforts and feel they are an important part of the organization.

Meanwhile, Geertshuis, Morrison and Cooper-Thomas (2015) demonstrated in their study that subordinates in low LMX relationship may not feel as an important part of an organization and therefore is less willing to communicate and share responsibility. Earlier academician has revealed that several previous studies have observed the direct relationship of high quality LMX on workers. This is consistent with Le Blanc and González-Romá (2012) who argued the importance of LMX relationship, where assistants in high LMX relations can feel dedicated to their workplace, willing to communicate regularly and completely with their managers and this empowers managers to identify their performance at work and help them to rate consequently. While in low quality LMX, supervisors might not discuss equally all related info with their subordinates, that can cause to make them frail supervisors resulting to know lesser about their pursuance, and perhaps probably to accept that workers in low quality LMX are weak performers.

Some researchers like Fix and Sias (2006) have acknowledged communication as a influential tool; comprehending information and treatise as valued possessions that are differentially owed by managers. Indeed, Bakar, Dilbeck, and McCroskey (2010) discussed in their research regarding behavior of supervisors that differ with LMX in terms of equally quantity and reputation. These consequences bring a sense of receiving, affiliation and gratification which in turn benefits them to contribute towards organization more effectively.

From the perspective of organizational communication and management, work of Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) is probably the most mentioned scholar. According to Graen and Uhl-Ben (1995) workers in higher LMX relations have healthier communication treatment and receive updated info from their managers, which is considered undoubtedly expressed outlooks. For example, Dulebohn et al. (2012) findings specifically enhance our understanding and proved that in high quality LMX employees get better and prompt criticism on their work-related tasks which empowers them to adjust and alter workers performance and as a result their output is better, and they are considered better employees as compared to their colleagues' in lower LMX.

On the same notion, Harris, Li and Kirkman (2014) pointed out that in high quality exchanges, the employee's performance is evaluated promising in short and long run period. In this similar context, Duarte, Goodson, and Klich (1994) study findings highlighted that those workers who were in lower class exchange relations have ratings that are constant with their impartial effectuation in the transitory and long time period. Therefore, organizations must place more attention to enhance the quality of LMX relationship with employees.

As stated earlier, successful organizational growth usually does not rely on better leadership potentials but also the inclination to begin contact and improve LMX relationships between employees effectively. Furthermore, Punyanunt-Carter et al. (2016) found in their study that leader and member characteristics are interactional variables rather than individual characteristics. This means that the leaders and members must interact with each other mutually, rather than the leader

only put concentration on individual employees and develop relationship with only a few members in the organization. In fact, the quality of LMX relationship is crucial as it determines the success and failure of employees as well as organizations. Additionally, Diensch and Liden (1986) found that communion, among the boss and staff may determine the form of reciprocity that is eventually developed. It is therefore very easy to be perceive that it is certainly hard for both the leader and employee to succeed the type of exchange if they do not work effectively. Furthermore, the researchers observed there are comparison and similarities of both the leaders' and members' perception of usual predicted LMX. On contextual variable grounds, Kinicki and Vecchio (1994) highlights that bosses who spend more period in the workstation tended to have less difference among their members.

Based on the above reviews, it can be concluded that researchers such as Yammarino, Dionne, Chun, and Dansereau (2005) have already expanded a detailed and complete comprehension of how LMX impact numerous administrative conclusions in synchronization with LMX theory. Additionally, in the above-mentioned context, LMX also addressed the greatness of communication in the management development. The discussions that have been presented above clearly shows the importance of LMX quality towards employee job satisfaction.

#### **2.4 Relationship of LMX Quality and Employee Job Satisfaction**

The researcher has observed that most previous studies develop the understanding that leaders are likely to continue and develop work relationship extending from in group relationship to out group relationship (Konya, Nesic, & Matic, 2015; Liao, Hu, & Chung, 2009; Madlock & Martin, 2007; Payne, 2014). The superior employed

affiliation is occasionally stated as a corporation, recognized by a high grade of shared encouraging outcome such as faithfulness, admiration, and expertise in their exertion. In comparison to this, low class employed relations is commonly directed by their work agreement (Joiner & Leveson, 2015; Michael, 2014; Shirazi, Nikkar, & Jafaripour, 2014).

Moreover, the meta-synthesis of Dulebohn et al. (2012) similarly revealed that LMX quality is consistent to significant communication consequences (turnover of staff) and mindset effects (such as job gratification, consummation with manager). Whereas, Gaur and Ebrahimi (2013) argued that the studies regarding LMX indicated that the boss connection with their associates has a most important influence on various forms of job practices. Additionally, Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) findings specified that superiors delight in trustful relationship between managers in a high class LMX. Hence, they look for anticipated and inspiring jobs; where they get more attention and support from managers; they are influenced to collaborate with their colleagues to compensate managers' determinations; they were found more attached to the organization; their positive outlooks towards their job increased (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Volmer et al., 2011). Additionally, such workers have a more effective exchange with their colleagues (Rasouli & Haghtaali, 2009). Therefore, all of these factors can bring worker gratification at work and improvement in organizations.

Reviews of the literature suggest satisfaction has been found to be positively related to LMX (Chen et al., 2007; Golden & Veiga, 2008; Liu, Lin, & Hu, 2013; Michael, 2011; Mykletun & Glasø, 2015; Tang & Naumann, 2015). The followers of

the LMX theory demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between LMX quality and job satisfaction (van Breukelen, Schyns, & Le Blanc, 2006). Past studies on LMX illustrated that high quality LMX influence job satisfaction (Collins et al., 2014; Michael, 2011; Zhang, Wang, & Shi, 2012). Stringer (2006) found that high quality LMX not only positively affect superior job satisfaction but organizational outcomes as well. This result is consistent with the same concept given by Herzberg (1959) in the “theory of job satisfaction” (House & Wigdor, 1967). He discussed that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not the same sets of working situations that are subjective by different factors. Applying the simple regression analysis Schriesheim, Neider, and Scandura (1998) proved that LMX has significant effects on subordinate efficiency and job fulfilment. Moreover, the LMX diversity intensification the low LMX subordinate’s performance while, there were no variation in the individual performance of high LMX members. The discussion shall conclude by looking at the role of LMX which had a positive consequence on group effectiveness contingent upon the level of linkage e.g., members with high linkage have a higher efficacy while those members with lower interdependence resulted in lower performance, as proven by Liden, Erdogan, Wayne, and Sparrowe (2006).

Konya et al. (2015) view is also shared by Stringer (2006) who claimed there are several benefits of high-quality relationships, for example exceptional behavior, variance in the distribution of prescribed recompenses and encouraging work-related response. However, members in low quality LMX relationship experienced the contrary kind of treatment (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). Furthermore, the famous social exchange theory, describes that in-group LMX members are expected to link



to achieve positive results. According to the findings, in group LMX relations are linked to the satisfaction of members' (Harris, Wheeler, & Kacmar, 2009).

## **2.5 Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is a forethought as a salient attribute which is repeatedly measured by various organizations. Organizational scholars have been concerned for a long time on the reasons why employees' reports are found to be contented with their occupations, whereas in contrast others asseverate considerable lesser levels of restitution (Locke, 1976). Since the 1930s, employee satisfaction has been studied. Sias (2005) noted that contentment is a viewpoint that meditates the magnitude to which an individual enjoys their work. For example, Giri and Kumar (2010) indicated that communication plays an important part in employee job satisfaction, whereby being better informed will result in employees having more confidence, trust and level of satisfaction in their job.

Organizations are considered as a lot of practice which are impacted by individuals and organizational aspects. Consequently, it is essential to ponder these practices, especially the variables that decide them in the hotel business. There are many studies which have focused on job satisfaction since the 1900s. However, in the particular fields of social psychology, job satisfaction is considered as one of the significant and most often studied variable (Akehurst, Comeche, & Galindo 2009). Additionally, there is a huge body of literature which highlights that employee job satisfaction has been a great priority of research for many scholars in a wide variety of disciplines for many years (Balouch & Hassan, 2014; Erdogan & Enders, 2007; Johlke & Duhan, 2000; Khan, Asghar, & Zaheer, 2014; Malik, Wan, Ahmad, Naseem, & Rehman, 2015; Meta, Alib & Alic, 2015; Sangaran & Jeetesh, 2015).

There are a number of findings which show a significant relationship with employee job satisfaction (Dunnette, Campbell, & Jaastad, 1963; King, 1970; Locke, 1976) while other findings have shown no connection at all (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955). Many researchers have studied job satisfaction comprehensively in the various fields like nursing, psychology, and sociology (Angel, Matz, & Amato, 2008; McCann, Hughes, Adair, & Cardwell, 2009; Wells, Minor, Wild, Parsons, & Dietz, 2006). Furthermore, Handsome (2009) found that famous researchers such as Taylor, Mayo, Maslow, and Herzberg had discussed and found a positive relationship of job satisfaction with other variables. Therefore, investigators have formed a disparity that look employee job satisfaction in a variation of conditions. Consequently, worker job satisfaction may accelerate work efficacy under certain settings, or when positive communication practices are showed. Hence, these different kinds of situations need to be presented for contented employee conjunction to exist, and this is the main consideration of this study.

According to Hamermesh (2001) job satisfaction is an outcome of employees' potentials, aims, hard work, expectations from seniors and colleagues with their existing status. It can also be considered as multidimensional perspective to their professions and work places. Furthermore, from these above arguments, Qu and Tse (1996) argued that the quality of job satisfaction depends upon several aspects such as, working conditions and superior subordinate relationships. Employees need to socialize and develop a relationship with their seniors and colleagues in the workplace. Hence, communication skills and certain individual characteristics are as important for better employee job satisfaction.

In this context, Clark and Oswald's (1996) research findings validate that a member might be pleased with a certain cluster of people and profession qualities, whereas not with others. In relating the above statement, it might be conceivable to propose that job satisfaction is a combination of a large variation of mechanisms where one works. Therefore, organizations must place more emphasis on preparing good and friendly attitude towards employees. Organizations must determine and evaluate the aspects that have a significant role in gratifying the workers desires at work.

It has been found that almost many variables that influence member job gratification, several of which have a direct connection to communication (Rothausen, González & Griffin 2009). It has been noted that more than 12,000 studies focused on the particular theme of job satisfaction. Therefore, it is significant that further investigation on the influence of job satisfaction on employees be conducted by considering the organizational setting. Other studies also suggest the same outcome (Jenaibi, 2010). Yet it can be measured easily that it's hard for the workers to accomplish their work efficiently once problem arise regarding their job satisfaction.

Managerial communication scholars have extensively observed the affiliation between many communication domains and administrative consequences. For instance, some extensive investigation highlights that communication is correlated to job satisfaction (Boyd & Jensen, 1972; Burke & Wilcox, 1969; Chaurasia & Shukla, 2013; Johlke & Duhan, 2000; Madlock & Kennedy-Lightsey, 2010; Madlock, 2008; Steele & Plenty, 2015). Even though communicative associations are not considered

the solitary aspect of member job consummation, few investigations have shown that communicative relations do forecast significant change in employee job satisfaction.

The connection among employee gratification have been concerned an excessive attention of examination, as well as some studies directing on job satisfaction and its connection to job obligation (Yang, 2010), devotion to firm, the result of constructive and adverse affectivity with relating to manager fulfilment (Iverson & Deery, 2001) and communication awareness (Richmond, McCroskey, & Davis, 1982).

Job satisfaction is an important variable which remains in the limelight of investigators who have studied its antecedents (Abdullah et al., 2011; Choi, Flynn, & Aiken, 2011; Chovwen, 2007; Darmon, 2011; Yang, 2010) and job satisfaction consequences (Bowling, Eschleman, & Wang, 2010; De Gieter, Hofmans, & Pepermans, 2011) in relations of organizational, job-related and specific aspects. Researchers always have curiosity in studying job satisfaction due to its dynamic significance to organizational achievement (Herzberg, 2003).

Academic literatures suggested that satisfaction at work is the mixture of emotional state, attachments and employee's affiliation with their current workplace (Akehurst et al., 2009). Galup, Klein and Jiang (2008) reasoned that effective and profit-making companies usually have very contented workers, who are very devoted and work hard for their organizations. It can however be understood in comparison to the above statement the employees who are treated poorly and have low level of job satisfaction can cripple an organization (Garland, McCarty, & Zhao, 2009). On

the same notion, Murphy and Fridkin (2004) points out that negative outcome may be due to the strong correlation of the quality of work with job satisfaction.

Moreover, Arokiasamy (2013) discussed that satisfied employees are those who appreciate their position and feel delighted for their struggles and will finally become the most prosperous and gives benefits to their companies. Employee satisfaction describes the employees' joyfulness, comfort, rewarding their wishes and wants in their workplace. Various measures highlighted that employee satisfaction is an important aspect in employee inspiration, employee accomplishment, progressive employee determination and self-confidence in the workplace. Whereas few other aspects which lead to worker satisfaction consists of good treatment, respect, providing employee acknowledgement for good work, empowering employees in decision making, offering good benefits and compensation, perks and positive management which bring success to their goals, dimensions, and hopes.

Additionally, O'Malley, Ritchie, Lord, Gregory, and Young's (2009) findings support that supervisors play a significant role on employee satisfaction and could influence the perception among the organization and employees. Furthermore, Helop, Smith, Metcalfe, Macleod and Hart (2002) stated that profession gratification is considered as the communication between working class prospects and needs linked to their work, and what is actually presented to them.

Moreover, high levels of job satisfaction may be considered a good symbol of emotional and mental state of employees. Secondly, the behavior of employees

depending on their level of job satisfaction and thus, affects the working and activities of the organization's business. It can be easily concluded that job satisfaction will result in positive behavior while dissatisfaction will result in negative behavior of employees at work (Spector, 1997). Pool (1997) discussed the five important dimensions which can help to measure job satisfaction: the job itself, pay, promotion chances, supervision, and co-workers. The main objective of studying job satisfaction is to develop better understanding of these variables and their influence on job satisfaction that will empower managers to know how employees form their attitudes that affect their job satisfaction (Dionne, 2000).

In addition, Madlock (2008) stated that the ability of the supervisor in communication has been found very effective in affecting employees' level of communication and job satisfaction. Pincus (1986) discussed in his research that communication of supervisor, employee's response, and higher administration communication are very basic requirements for job satisfaction, while studying distinct features of job satisfaction and linking it with the inclusive communication satisfaction. Most of the studies highlighted several aspects of the employee's job satisfaction such as job, salary levels, communication and relationship with co-workers (Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 2005). For the past 40 years, many studies have tried to categorize and discover the factors that affect job satisfaction. Abdullah et al. (2011) considered some important factors such as promotion, employee faithfulness and appreciation of work which influence employee satisfaction, but he found wages as the main factor for job satisfaction.

Locke (1976) proposed the theory of value, in which he suggested that employee satisfaction does not address employee individual requirements but is

related to the employee's basic needs or values. For instance, having good salary package, supervisor communication, working environment and probabilities to excel in the future, may completely affect the employee's loyalty towards job and eventually improved job satisfaction. However, among noticeable issue of worker dissatisfaction about work is originated from the environment and the nature of the job itself, within which interactive communications between employees and supervisors takes place (Barnett & Brennan, 1997). According to Korte and Wynne (1996) a weakening relationship in managerial structure due to lack of interpersonal communication between workers and supervisors, always result in negative consequence on job satisfaction and sometimes leads to employees leaving their jobs.

DeFranco and Schmidgall (2001) studied the dimension of job satisfaction and its predictors in the hotel industry. Particularity, this industry is considered to have specific importance because it is a vastly human-dominated industry, it is important to hold the labor turnover at a certain level and employee's dissatisfaction with the industry may lead to client displeasure with the quality of service delivered to the customers.

However, few academic studies deal with the employees' anticipation or satisfaction levels with their jobs with specific relation to the tourism industry. Some academicians have tried to discover the relationship between education and job satisfaction (Kokko & Guerrier, 1994). Additionally, some researchers have attempted to examine the relationship between the level of job satisfaction and employees' intent to job hunt. Qu and Tse's (1996) study indicated significant

relationship between satisfaction and turnover; hence, workers with lesser satisfaction levels in their jobs are normally expected to leave their current jobs.

## **2.6 Relationship Between Superior - Subordinate Communication and Job Satisfaction**

According to Vakola and Nikolaou (2005) effective communication from superior is considered an essential tool to judge employee satisfaction. Many job-related issues such as work appreciation, support, kind-heartedness from the boss and downward communication are proven features of employee job satisfaction (Wińska, 2010). Supervisory communication is considered the most important element in an organization, without effective communication nothing can take place in an organization. The best developments and objectives will not progress unless we can communicate what we want to do. Thus, researchers should examine the relationships between internal communication and other variables that influence job satisfaction. Both communication and job satisfaction are correlated to organization's turnover. Hence, it is very essential to understand the impact of communication and job satisfaction respectively; it might be helpful for the betterment of the development of organizations (Wińska, 2010). Although it has been noticed that there is an inconsistent relationship between job satisfaction and individual performance (Kim, 2002) however, consistent indication proves that low job satisfaction consequences are absenteeism, reduced job commitment and turnover (Kim, 2002; Mosadeghrad, 2013; Wińska, 2010).

Similarly, researchers Jha (2004) and Volmer et al., (2011) emphasized in their study the behavior of the supervisors. An earlier study conducted by Wińska



(2010) revealed that the supervisor and his communication abilities have direct influence on employee job satisfaction. Empirical researches of Raina and Roebuck (2016) have proven that superior - subordinate communication is an important attribute of job satisfaction in the workplace. However, subordinate perception of the supervisor's actions can affect either positively or negatively on job satisfaction. The manner in which supervisors' practice to communicate with their subordinates is considered more important than the verbal content. Whereas, those individuals who have negative views about their supervisors are less likely to communicate and work, whereas on the other hand individuals who have positive thoughts about their supervisor are more willing to communicate and considered gratified with their work and atmosphere.

Furthermore, Pincus (1986) highlighted that perceptions of a high-quality subordinate supervisor relationship will positively influence an employee's job satisfaction. The immediate supervisor is considered the main person who an employee relies on to inform them of job and organizational information. An employee who is unsure of the expectations of their peers and supervisors and is given inadequate information by the organization may cause an employee to be less satisfied with their job and less committed to the organization, and more likely to have intentions of leaving the organization (Ongori, 2007).

Available studies highlighted that supervisors lack effective communication skills. According to a survey conducted in 2002 on U.S. organizations among 1,104 employees, 86% of the workers agreed that their supervisors consider themselves as good communicators, but only 14% of those workers in actual

believed that their supervisors have effective communication skill (Raina et al., 2016). Moreover, previous researchers have investigated that job satisfaction implies a negative relationship with employee turnover (Dugguh & Dennis, 2014). Likewise, another research conducted by Moyes, Owusu-Ansah and Ganguli 2006, proves that employees will show negative behaviors such as withdrawal and absence from an aching and displeasing work situation. Job dissatisfaction provokes employees to leave the organization and this attitude leads to negative behavior and the withdrawal conclusion (Scott & Taylor, 1985). Therefore, it is essential for the researchers to clarify the factors affecting employee job satisfaction from the organizational perspective.

## **2.7 Theory**

The researcher has taken the following underpinning theory for this research.

### **2.7.1 Leader Member Exchange (LMX)**

Although the current study is using LMX as a lens to understand supervisor subordinate relationships, a few overarching perspectives need to be addressed. The theory of LMX has enriched our understanding of communication behaviors and activities in organizations (Fairhurst, 2001; Lee, 2005). Graen and his colleagues Graen (2004), and Graen and Scandura (1987) indicated that leaders or supervisors develop somewhat unique dyadic exchange patterns with each of their followers or subordinates through negotiated interactions. Some exchange patterns are typically described as high-quality social exchange relationships (called “in-group”) and others as low quality economic exchange relationships (called “out-group”) (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Graen, 2004; Liden & Maslyn, 1998). This study focuses

on the more encompassing leader member exchange theory (LMX theory) regarding the quality of the supervisor subordinate relationship with employee's job satisfaction.

This study explores leader member exchange theory (LMX), which theorizes when leaders and followers have good exchanges or high quality effective LMX relationships, they share mutual trust, feel better, accomplish more, and the overall unit performance within organization is enhanced (Stringer, 2006).

LMX theory suggests that exchanges (e.g., work and social interactions) may take place between managers and their employees. Based on these exchanges, managers develop relationships of different quality with their employees. Employees in high quality relationships receive a number of benefits compared to their colleagues in low quality relationships. These benefits include good communication, better roles, higher levels of emotional support, and better access to varied resources (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). The implication of the LMX theory is when leaders and followers have good exchanges or high quality effective LMX relationship they share reciprocated trust, respect and obligation (Graen, 1976; Graen & Schieman, 1978; Graen et al., 1982).

In the LMX theory, supervisors distribute resources (such as decision-making influence, tasks, and support) differently among their various employees (Graen et al., 1972). This differential treatment results in leader member relationships that vary with respect to quality (Graen et al., 1972). High quality relationships are characterized by higher levels of trust and attention, less direct supervision, higher levels of support from leader to member, and greater influence of the member on

decision making than in low quality relationships (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga 1975). Furthermore, according to Timm (1978) an individual's satisfaction at work may readily be influenced by communication interaction he or she experiences. Effective communication with a supervisor can be particularly rewarding in that such interaction can provide information that reduces uncertainty about one's present or future conditions at work.

In general, LMX theory focuses on intellectual communication behaviors (Timm, 1978). Some researchers, however, have begun to consider communication as a more central mechanism in the leader member relationship, in essence conceptualizing communication as another resource intentionally distributed differentially among employees. Fairhurst (1993) specifically identified communication practices that characterized LMX relationships of varying quality.

An essential principle of leader member exchange (LMX) theory is that leaders and supervisors have limited amounts of personal contacts within the organization (Dansereau et al., 1975). A social and organizational resource (e.g., time, energy, role, discretion, and positional power) distribute resources among their subordinates selectively (Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen & Scandura 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Leaders do not interact with all subordinates equally, which over time, results in the formation of LMXs that may vary in quality (Muller & Lee, 2002).

Furthermore, available literature argued LMX is significantly related to several organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, turnover plan and job

performance (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Gerstner & Day, 1997). Thus, particular research on LMX proposed that high-quality relationships are likely associated with positive subordinate outcomes. As we move towards a better understanding of which characteristics of LMX relationships influence various individual attitudes and behaviors, we will not only be capable to further develop and improve LMX theories but will also be in a better position to fill some critical gaps in the existing research. For instance, earlier research on supervisor subordinate dyads have put forward that communicative exchange in the superior subordinate relationship plays a substantial role in expectations of their LMX quality. The researcher also agrees with scholars who argue that more attention on LMX needs to originate from the perspective of communication as interpersonal process in the leader member dyadic relationships (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012). Hence, the argument is consistent with that of Fairhurst and Connaughton (2014) who saw communication as a series of dyadic exchanges that determine leader member relationship quality.

Broadly speaking, LMX theory has enhanced our understanding of the leadership and communication process between superiors and subordinates. Thus, past research has explicated how the quality of LMX affects subordinates' and superiors' communication in areas such as discourse patterns, upward influence, communication expectations, cooperative communication, perceived organizational justice, and decision-making practices (Lee & Jablin, 1995; Yukl & Fu, 1999).

Additionally, quality of relationship between subordinate and supervisor can easily be understood by leader member exchange theory which supports that leaders do not interact with subordinates uniformly because supervisors have limited

resources and time. Among numerous streams of leadership theory, LMX theory examines the quality of leader member relationships and provides scholars an exclusive lens to study leadership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997; Schriesheim, Castro, & Cogliser, 1999).

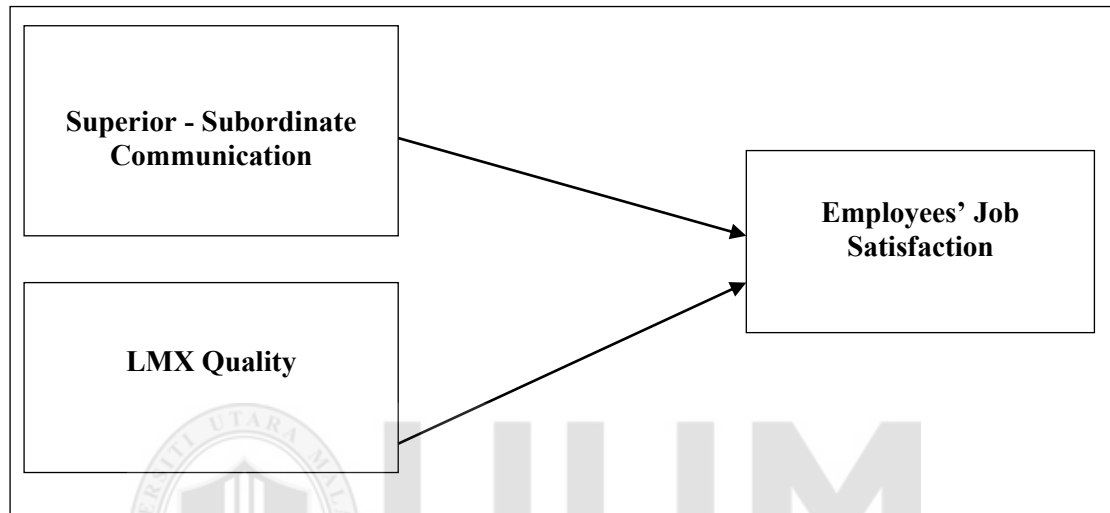
In describing the relationship between superior subordinate, many communication scholars use leader member exchange theory (LMX) as a basis for their explanations of this dyadic relationship (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Siron et al., 2015). Furthermore, the researcher has conducted several studies on the LMX theory (Bakar, Dilbeck, & McCroskey, 2010; Dulebohn et al., 2012; Herdman et al., 2014; Martin et al., 2016; van Breukelen et al., 2006) which show positive associations between LMX and job satisfaction (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Harris et al., 2009). Hence, LMX theory has been applied as the underpinning theory for this research.

## **2.8 Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework is “a conceptual model of how one theorizes the relationships among the several factors that have been identified as important to the problem” (Sekaran, 2000, p. 63). “It offers the conceptual foundation for a researcher to proceed with the research and as it also serves as a method of identifying the “network of relationships” among the variables to be studied. Simply, it is a plan of how the researcher will undertake his study based on the written objectives and what the study hopes to achieve based on past theories.”

The theoretical framework designed for the present study helps the researcher to postulate and test the factors that exists between LMX and employee job satisfaction through the amount of opportunity given to the employee by the superior-subordinate communication. It also helped in the formulation of research

hypotheses. Therefore, in the theoretical framework, employee job satisfaction is the dependent variable, while LMX quality and superior - subordinate communication will be the independent variables in this study figure 2.1 presents the theoretical framework designed for this research.



*Figure 2.1: Proposed Theoretical framework*

## **2.9 Hypotheses**

After determining the independent and dependent variables of this study, the researcher established two research questions, which leads to build up two hypotheses of the study such as:

- H1:** There is a significant relationship between superior - subordinate communication and employees' job satisfaction.
- H2:** There is a significant relationship between LMX quality and employees' job satisfaction.

## **2.10 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, a detail review of previous literatures has been presented which studied the superior - subordinate communication, LMX quality and their relationship towards employee's job satisfaction. In conclusion, the researcher has developed a theoretical framework based on the available literature reviews, and consequently the researcher has established the study's hypothesis.





## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter explains the research methodology developed for the present study. It provides an appropriate guidance throughout the research procedures. This chapter will present the research design, data gathering procedures, sampling design, measurement scales, construct measurement, data processing and data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design refers to an outline for collecting and analyzing data (Bryman, 2004). Sekaran and Bougie (2010) describes a research design as a technique of gathering and analyzing data to attain solution. This current study applied a quantitative approach where quantitative data is the measurement and numbers are used to represent the phenomenon being studied (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

A quantitative approach allows the researcher to make a generalization about the population of the study. In lieu to that, a cross-sectional approach was considered to be the most appropriate for data collection. This research also involved a one-time measurement, where it used a cross-sectional sample population (taking a sample of population elements at one point in time) and data were gathered just once, over a period of two months (i.e. data were collected between March and April 2017). Thus, data is gathered and conducted in a natural work environment (i.e. with nominal interference). The decision to use the cross-sectional research design was

also influenced by a number of relevant studies (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Madlock & Kennedy-Lightsey, 2010) who have used the same quantitative research design.

### **3.3 Research Procedure**

This research applied the survey method for data collection, in which survey questionnaires, specifically the self-administered questionnaire was used targeting the frontline and back stage employees (non- managerial staff/subordinates). The field work was conducted in the duration between the months of March and April 2017. A list of eleven 5-star hotels was established after confirming with the Langkawi Development Authority. Identified hotel HR managers were contacted via email to acknowledge the research undertaken. After obtaining their agreement as the respondents, researcher distribute the questionnaire to these hotels. Out of these eleven hotels only nine hotels had given permission and agreed to participate in this research. Respondents answered the questionnaire with the presence of researcher. To maintain confidentiality, the list of employees' details working in these nine 5-star hotels was not provided to the researcher.

The researcher gave a brief description to the Human Resource (HR) department regarding the survey. A set of forty-two questionnaires were distributed in each hotel, where the Human Resource (HR) department further distributed among the potential participants who gave their consent to participate in this survey. Then potential participants were explained in detail about the nature of the research. A written consent for participation was gained from volunteering subordinates using a consent form by the Human Resource (HR) department. Four hundred and fifty

employees were approached for the study, out of them only three hundred and twenty-two filled questionnaires were returned to the researcher.

Prior to the study, the potential participants received a letter from the HR department of the hotels, including a message from the manager to inform that a researcher is conducting a survey and collecting the data, requesting their participation in a study designed to understand their experiences; both with their job and management within the hotel. Shortly thereafter, potential participants received the questionnaires. All potential participants were again informed that their decision to participate or not participate in the study would be recorded, but that would not be shared with any members of the organization. Participants were also informed that all their responses on the questionnaire would be kept confidential.

### **3.4 Population and Sampling**

This thesis focused only on employees (non-managerial employees) attached to the Malaysian hotel industry, by specifically focusing on 5-star hotels located in Langkawi Island, Malaysia. This industry was chosen due to the fact that it has been one of the most important industries that contribute towards Malaysia's economic growth and it continues to grow very rapidly. Moreover, as the tourism industry continues to grow, it is also expected that more employees will be needed to work here.

The main reason for selecting the hotel industry is because it is considered as an ideal platform to test the model at hand. This is because the hotel industry (1) faces highly competitive market, (2) is a highly labor-intensive business, and (3)

involves relatively long-term relationships with customers (Boshoff & Allen, 2000; Varela González & García Garazo, 2006). Based on these common characteristics of a hotel operation, the effective superior-subordinate communication among employees and their willingness to communicate effectively is considered essential to guarantee the organization's success. Particularly the manager is responsible for the superior-subordinate communication relationship within the organization, their attitude and behavior is critical in the overall assessment of the employee job satisfaction.

The researcher has identified the population in Table 3.1 within the eleven five-star hotels in Langkawi (Langkawi Development Authority LADA).

Table 3.1  
*List of Hotels*

No.	Name of Hotels
1	Meritus Pelangi Beach Resort and Spa, Langkawi
2	The Ritz-Carlton, Langkawi,
3	The Danna Langkawi
4	Four Season Resort Langkawi
5	St Regis Langkawi
6	Vivanta by Taj-Rebak Island, Langkawi
7	The Datai Langkawi
8	Tanjung Rhu Resort
9	Berjaya Langkawi Resort
10	The Westin Langkawi Resort and Spa
11	The Andaman, a luxury Collection Resort, Langkawi

Sampling specifies a procedure of choosing a sample from a population. Sampling design involves five main steps, i.e. defining the actual population, selecting an appropriate sampling frame, determine sampling techniques, define the sample size and accomplish the sampling process. All the steps mentioned helps to identify the qualified target respondents to participate in the survey.

### 3.4.1 Sampling Frame

The most critical problem that arose during the process of identifying the sampling frame was the lack of sources that could provide information on the total number of employees attached to Langkawi 5-stars hotel industry. The Human Resource department of these 5-star hotels had been generous enough to provide valuable information that enabled the researcher to move forward to the next step in identifying the target population by providing a list containing the names and addresses of all employees working there. The list was also provided based on the confidentiality agreement made with the Human Resources department handling the employee's details. The respondents participating in this study are the non-managerial employees of the 5-star hotels located in Langkawi Island.

### 3.4.2 Sample Size

To get the research samples needed to conduct this research, the sample size calculation method proposed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) will be employed. The formula for the sample size population by the author is presented below:

$$\frac{X^2NP(1 - P)}{d^2(N - 1) + X^2P(1 - P)}$$

Where N = the population size "3361"

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this will provide the maximum sample size)

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

X<sup>2</sup>= Chi square

P = .50

$$\frac{1.96^2(3361)(.5)(1-.5)}{.05^2(3361-1) + 1.96^2(.5)(1-.5)}$$

$$\frac{2,965.17}{7.7654}$$

= 381 approximately

Therefore, the average sample size suitable for this research is 381 samples.

According to Krejice and Morgan suggestion, a sample of 381 is suitable for the study. However, for fair sample selection among the employees the sample proportion was calculated below:

$$np = \frac{381}{9} = 42.33 \dots \dots \dots \text{equation (i)}$$

= 42 approximately.

A set of forty-two questionnaires were distributed in each hotel. With this, a total of 450 questionnaires were distributed randomly among the nine 5-star hotels in Langkawi Island Malaysia.

### 3.4.3 Sampling Technique

For the purpose of reaching the proportionate audience of the target population according to the sample size, the present study employs simple random sampling method. According to Creswell, (2003) using simple random sampling gives equal chances to every member of the population to be selected. The target respondents for this study are frontline and backstage employees working in 5-star hotels. Therefore, simple random sampling is the appropriate sampling technique to collect data.

### 3.5 Instrumentations

A researcher will not be able to test the hypotheses and find answers to the issues being investigated unless the variables are measured in some ways. Thus, this section will discuss the different ways in which the variables identified for this study lend themselves to measurement.

In measuring the variables, the researcher identified appropriate sets of questionnaires that would specifically measure each variable under study. This research adapts the method of a instrument for collecting data. A questionnaire is a pre - structured written set of questions used for data collection. The questionnaire is considered an efficient and effective tool for data collection, where the researcher knows exactly what is required and how to measure the variables of the study. It was utilized because quantified data regarding particular population has been needed for this study, and there is no better way to tap the individuals' perspective except by using questionnaire. The adoption/adaptation method was preferred as all sets of instruments were established and had consistently shown high reliability values (see discussions on measurements of items). Each instrument required that respondents rated their feelings on a 5-point Likert Scale. The measurements of each variable are described below. Since the study was conducted in Malaysia, the participants were given two options of answering either the English or Bahasa Melayu versions of the questionnaire. As many of the employees do not have a good command of the English language, experts also translated all question into Bahasa Melayu.

The questionnaire comprised of four parts specifically; Section A - Respondents Demographic Profile, (2) Section B - Superior - Subordinate

Communication, (3) Section C - LMX quality, (4) Section D- Job Satisfaction (refer Appendix A). The questionnaire was attached with a cover letter that explained the purpose of the study. The current study had measured the respondents on five points Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. Moreover, this helped the respondents to state their attitudes by showing to the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statements of the questionnaire.

### **3.5.1 Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable of this study was the job satisfaction. The construct was measured using the instrument developed by The Minnesota Survey Questionnaire (MSQ). The short version of MSQ (revised in 1985) was used in this research. It comprised of twenty items, and all items were measured in 5-point Likert scale. This scale is frequently used in the research in the sphere of the hotel industry and reported ( $\alpha=.87$ ) in similar study related to job satisfaction (Malik et al., 2015).

### **3.5.2 Independent Variables**

The discussions on the independent variables will be discussed based on the categorization of variables-superior - subordinate communication and LMX quality.

#### **3.5.2.1.1 Superior - Subordinate Communication**

To measure superior-subordinate communication, the current study adapted the scale developed by Miles et al. (1996). A total number of twenty-four items (see Appendix A) were used to measure the construct; all the items were measured in 5-point Likert scale. This measurement had been used in previous studies of superior - subordinate communication (Bakar et al., 2010; Steele & Plenty, 2015). These items represent



eight types of messages developed by Huseman's et al., (1980) in four dimensions, namely the positive relationship communication ( $\alpha=0.84$ ), upward openness communication ( $\alpha=0.82$ ), negative relationship communication ( $\alpha=0.81$ ) and job relevant communication ( $\alpha=0.86$ ).

### 3.5.2.1.2 LMX Quality

The current study has borrowed 12-item leader member exchange-multidimensional scale (LMX-MDM) from the work of Liden and Maslyn (1998), to measure LMX quality in this study. The said measure has the ability to comprehend the account of the relationship between the superior and subordinate in an organization (Bakar et al., 2007). LMX-MDM scale is broadly used in the communication literature (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Michael, 2014). Each individual item in the scale is measured by a 5-point Likert scale. Bakar et al. (2010), reported ( $\alpha= 0.83$ ) for this instrument, which showed it is a reliable instrument.

Table 3.2 provides the detailed information regarding the variables and items used in this thesis.

Table 3.2

#### *Measurement Instruments*

Variables	Items
Superior Subordinate Communication	Positive Relationship Communication
	1. I think my superior jokes good naturedly with me
	2. I think that my superior asks for my suggestions about how each work task could be done
	3. I think my superior asks me about my interests outside of work
	4. I think my superior seeks my input on important decisions
	5. I think my superior strikes up casual conversations with me
	6. I think my superior asks me for suggestions for improvements in my group
	Upward Openness Communication

	7. I tell my supervisor when I think things are being done wrong
	8. I question my supervisor's instructions when I think they are wrong.
	9. I make a suggestion to my superior about how the work could be done.
	10. I think my superior asks for my suggestion about how work tasks could be done
	11. I tell my superior about my work problems
	Negative Relationship Communication
	12. I think my superior ridicules or make fun of me
	13. I think my superior criticizes my work in front of others
	14. I think my superior is critical of me as a person.
	15. I think my superiors asks me to do thing rather than tells me
	16. I think my superior tells me how they discipline worker
	17. I think my superior admits to their mistakes
	Job Relevant Communication
	18. I think my superior gives me recognition for good work
	19. I think my superior lets me know why changes are made in work assignments.
	20. I think my superior keeps me
	21. informed about rules and policies
	22. I think my superior gives clear instructions to me
	23. I think my superior informs me about future plan for me in the group
	24. I think my superior tells me the reasons for work schedules.
	LMX quality
	25. I like my superior very much as a person
	26. I think my superior is the kind of person I would like to have as a friend
	27. I think my superior is a lot of fun to work with
LMX Quality	28. I think my superior defends my work actions to a superior, even without complete knowledge of the issue in question
	29. I think my superior would defend me if I were "attacked" by others
	30. I think my superior would defend me to others in the organization if I made an honest mistake
	31. I carry out work tasks for my superior that go beyond what is specified in my job description
	32. I am willing to apply extra effort, beyond that normally required, to further the interest of the work group
	33. I do not mind working my hardest for my superior
	34. I am impressed with my superior's knowledge of their job
	35. I respect my superior's knowledge of and competency on the job
Employee Job Satisfaction	36. I admire my superior's professional skills
	Employee Job Satisfaction
	37. Being able to keep busy all of the time.

- 
38. The chance to work alone on the job.
  39. The chance to do different things from time to time.
  40. The chance to be 'somebody' in the community.
  41. The way my boss handles his/her workers.
  42. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions.
  43. Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience
  44. The way my job provides for steady employment.
  45. The chance to do things for other people.
  46. The chance to tell people what to do.
  47. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities.
  48. The way company policies are put into practice
  49. My pay and the amount of work that I do.
  50. The chances for advancement on this job.
  51. The freedom to use my own Judgment.
  52. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job.
  53. The working conditions.
  54. The way my co-workers get along with each other.
  55. The praise I get for doing a good job.
  56. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.
- 

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The data collected in this study was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. Before the main data analysis, data preparation, cleaning and screening such as coding, data editing, missing data and transformation was done to ensure that the collected data are qualified to be used for the primary data analysis. Descriptive analysis was conducted using frequency, mean, and percentage to describe the profile of the respondents and the data distributions.

Subsequently, many preliminary analyses including normality test, linearity and multicollinearity were conducted to assess the appropriateness of data for inferential analysis. The preliminary analyses are several statistical assumptions namely; normality, linearity and homoscedasticity (Bluman, 2012; Pallant, 2013)

that must be met before proceeding with inferential analysis. According to Pallant (2013), normality refers to the assessment of the normal distribution of the residuals about the predicted dependent variable. Meanwhile, linearity means there is a straight-line relationship between residuals and the dependent variable. Also, homoscedasticity is the assessment of variance of the residuals about dependent variable which assumes that scores should be the same for all predicted scores. These three statistical assumptions are examined, and their result must establish no major violations before conducting the inferential analysis in this study.

The inferential analysis was the main analysis used for testing the hypotheses. The inferential analysis involves regression analysis. Regression analysis and were done to explore the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The regression analysis is done to determine the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable, hence to test the hypotheses proposed in this study.

### **3.6.1 Standard Multiple Regression**

Multiple regression analysis can be employed to analyse and examine the variation of several independent variables on the dependent variables (Hair et al., 2010). Also, multiple regressions are used to enhance the accuracy of the predictions for the dependent variable over one independent variable. One advantage of multiple regression analysis is that the researcher can explore the interdependency between variables (Lattin et al., 2003). Pallant (2003) explained that there are three types of multiple regressions, namely: standard or simultaneous, hierarchical or sequential, and stepwise multiple regression. The standard or simultaneous multiple regression

is conducted by entering the independent variables in the regression equation at the same time. In a standard multiple regression, all independent variables have similar equal importance. Therefore, the standard multiple regression is employed in this research.

The standard multiple regression was used in analysing the relationship between the variables. It is used when more than one variable jointly regressed to provide explanations about the variance in the dependent variable. In multiple regressions,  $R^2$  indicates the amount of variation explained in the dependent variable. The result of the multiple regression can be interpreted when the F-statistics and its significance level is known.

### **3.7 Pilot Study**

Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, (2009) suggests that a pilot study should be conducted before the actual data collection methods were administered. This step is important to ensure that questionnaires are refined and that problems will not occur when respondents answer the questions. The pilot study will also help during data recording and in the assessment of validity and reliability of the data collected. The purpose of a pilot study is to ensure that the measurement instruments indicate high consistency when tested with respondents from different backgrounds at a different time and location. The common statistical test of reliability estimate is Cronbach's alpha (Hair et al., 2010).

According to Cooper and Schindler (2008) the appropriate sample size of a pilot study is between 25-100 respondents. For the pilot test, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to a similar group of samples in Langkawi, Kedah

between January and February 2017. 60 sets of pilot questionnaires were randomly distributed personally to each hotel with 41 respondents responding, a total of 68% response rate. The reliability test was performed using SPSS v24. The Cronbach's alpha for each variable is presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.3

*Reliability Test Results of the Measurement Instrument in the Pilot Study*

No.	Constructs	Items	Cronbach's alpha Value in previous study	Cronbach's alpha Value in pilot Test
1	Superior-subordinate communication	24	0.901	0.781
2	LMX quality	12	0.865	0.829
3	Employee Job satisfaction	20	0.906	0.847

In Table 3.3 the Cronbach's alpha coefficients indicate that the instruments are reliable, with a range from .78 to .84. It is important to note that the items for organizational reputation in this study have been reduced to 16, which yielded a better Cronbach's alpha value for the instrument to be used. The comparison between the reliability result of the pilot test with the original Cronbach's alpha value indicated consistent reliability of the measurement instruments. Therefore, a survey questionnaire was finalized for the present study consisting of 56 items from three latent constructs.

### **3.8 Reliability and Validity**

To ensure the quality of measurements, validity and reliability tests were conducted on data. Sekaran (2000) noted that a test of reliability is important as it looks at the consistency of the measurement used to measure a concept. This would allow for a research to be repeated and yielding the same results. Reliability is very much concerned with the research findings and it also provides credibility to the findings itself. Validity on the other hand, tests whether the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Therefore, in ensuring the reliability and validity of the data collected, the questions asked, “must be understood by the respondent in the way intended by the researcher and the answer given by the respondent must be understood by the researcher in the way intended by the respondent” (Foddy, 1994). To ensure that, the present study either adopted or adapted the instruments used in past researches. The method was significant, as this study needed to compare findings with past studies. Reliability measures the stability and consistency of the adopted and adapted measurement in measuring the concepts (Hair et al., 2010).

For quantitative research, reliability is commonly assessed using Cronbach’s alpha, which is a measure of internal consistency of items which makes up the scale. The reliability of the measurement utilized indicates the stability and consistency of the instrument used in measuring the concept. Most scholars support that the alpha value of the reliability should not be less than .70 (Baxter & Babbie, 2004). Hair et al. (2010) contend that the lower limit for Cronbach’s alpha is .70 though it may decrease to .60.

Validity refers to “the extent to which the instruments, method or measures used in a study actually measures what is supposed to describe or measure” (Crowther & Lancaster, 2012). It concerns the evidence that the techniques and instruments used in a study is appropriately measuring the intended concept (Hair et al., 2010). There are many types of validity, including “content validity”, “predictive validity”, “concurrent validity”, “construct validity”, “face validity”, “internal and external validity”, and “statistical validity” (Johnston & VanderStoep, 2009). However, Greener and Martelli (2015) suggested the importance of face validity, construct validity, and internal validity. They argued that for conducting data analysis, construct validity is considered the utmost important. Therefore, this study conducted construct validity on all the items. There are two means to determine construct validity, i.e., “convergent validity” and “discriminant validity” (Hair Jr, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016).

### **3.8.1 Test of Reliability**

In research, several types of reliability test are used. However, the most common and applied method to test the “inter-item” consistency and reliability is the “Cronbach’s alpha” coefficient (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). It indicates the consistency of respondents’ answer. After running reliability test using SPSS version 24.0 for windows, it was found that all the measurements had a high reliability standard ranging from 0.75 to 0.93. According to Hair et al. (2010) a score of Cronbach’s alpha coefficient 0.60 is considered an average reliability, while an alpha score of 0.70 or above indicates that the instrument has a high reliability standard.



### **3.8.2 Test of Validity**

Although face validity was deemed to be necessary, proclaiming it did not make it so. Thus, a stronger procedure; a panel approach, which consisted of qualified people were also included. Experienced researchers in communication and statistics, as well as an expert in language were consulted for the accuracy of measures and language used in the instrument.

To ensure how well an instrument will measure what it is purported to measure; content validity was conducted in this study. The researcher had a consultation with a small sample of respondents/panel of experts to ensure the appropriateness of items chosen to measure the constructs. The experts involved are teaching faculty members in the School of Multimedia Technology and Communication, UUM, and senior managers at EDC hotel UUM.

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presents the discussion on the methodology employed by the thesis. It first discussed the research design employed in the study. This was then followed by the discussions on population, sampling frame, sample size and sampling technique. The instruments section covered the discussions on data collection strategies which described how the data was collected. The selected respondents were non - managerial employees from the hotel industry at Langkawi. This academic research utilized multiple regression analysis to analyze the data. The researcher had collected the data and the findings will be discussed in chapter 4. Finally, the chapter described the pilot testing which also included the discussions on the results and the

test of reliability of each variable and its dimensions and the test of validity. The next chapter discusses the findings of the study.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the data analysis of the questionnaire survey. The data was gathered and then analyzed in response to the previous chapters. The chapter comprises of the following sections: introduction; data management; data screening proceeding to analysis; data analysis hypothesis testing and subsequently conclusion.

Chapter three has identified the research methodology used in the present study while this chapter provides relevant details of data analysis and results. Thus, the process begins with data examination and screening to prepare for quantitative analysis. It also presents descriptive statistics. Additionally, before the acceptable level of reliability for further analysis was established, a reliability test was performed on measurement scales. Conclusions are drawn in the last section.

#### **4.2 Profile of Respondents**

As discussed in Chapter 3, 450 questionnaires were distributed during the data collection process. Out of those 450-employee among whom the questionnaires have been distributed only 322 employees have completed and returned the surveys.

Table 4.1

*Demographic Factors*

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	257	80.07
Female	64	19.93
Total	321	100
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	66	20.56
26-35	246	76.64
36-45	8	2.49
>45	1	0.31
Total	321	100
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	197	61.4
Single	124	38.6
Total	321	100
<b>Ethnicity of Respondents</b>		
Others	26	8.10
Chinese	71	22.12
Malay	155	48.29
Indian	69	21.50
Total	321	100

Table 4.1 illustrates the overall profile of respondents who participated in this study. The demographic profile of employees working in 5-star hotels of Langkawi Island (N=322) Malaysia. As shown in Table 4.1, 80.07 % (n=257) of the respondents are male, 19.93 % (n=64) were female. The age of respondents in this study ranged from 18 to over 45 years. 20.56 % employees belong to the age group of 18-25 years, 76.64 % employees belong to the age group of 26-35, 2.49 % employees belong to the age group of 36-45 and .31 % employees are above the age of 45. The marital status of the employees as shown in Table 4.1 indicates that 61.4 % employees are married whereas 38.6 % employees are unmarried. Based on gender, results indicate that majority of respondents were males (80.07.1%); mostly were between the ages of 26-35 (76.64%). Additionally, majority of employees were

Malays represented by 48.29 percent, followed by the minority Chinese represented by 22.12 percent.

### 4.3 Descriptive Statistics

The description of the respondent's profile led to the discussion on the descriptive statistics of the variables. In this section, the variables (i.e. superior - subordinate communication, leader member exchange quality, and employee job satisfaction) are explained, explored and described in detail according to the items which appeared in the questionnaire. In answering the research questions and attending to the problem statement, the data were analyzed using the descriptive statistics by specifically focusing on the mean and SD. Since all instruments utilized a 5-point Likert scale type of measurement, the researcher had considered the suggestion made by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (2000) that the mean scores of all variables be divided into three levels—low (1.00 – 2.33), average (2.34 – 3.66) and high (3.67 – 5.00). The result presented in Table 4.2 shows that LMXQ has a mean score of 3.35. This shows that, majority of the respondents averagely agree with the measures of LMXQ.

Table 4.2

#### *Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.
Superior - Subordinate Communication	321	1	5	3.03	.766
Leader Member Exchange Quality	321	1	5	3.35	.513
Employee Job Satisfaction	321	1	5	3.06	.900

Based on the frequency of values, the mean and SD; a histogram was created. The analysis is the starting point for understanding the nature of the variables

involved in the study. This was done by characterizing and examining the shape of its distribution of values through regression analysis. The data were then examined by the simplest diagnostic test for normality which is the visual check of the histogram that compares the observed data values with a distribution approximating the normal distribution. This method is appropriate for the present study as it involved a large sample group. The analysis was important as it helped the researcher to gain an adequate perspective of the variables involved. Besides, the histogram also provided a visual representation of the frequency distribution that helped the researcher to conform to a normal distribution (Allen, Titsworth & Hunt, 2009).

The results of the histogram (see figure 4.1) showed that the residuals were well distributed and fell within the normal curve and the tails lied on the normal distribution line. The middle of the distribution line showed a normal curve and both tails showed no appreciable skewness to one side or the other. Even though there are a few cases toward the end of the set of values (the right side of the distribution) that stand apart from the others and could skew the distribution a bit, but overall the residuals were well distributed and fell within the normal curve (Allen et al., 2009).

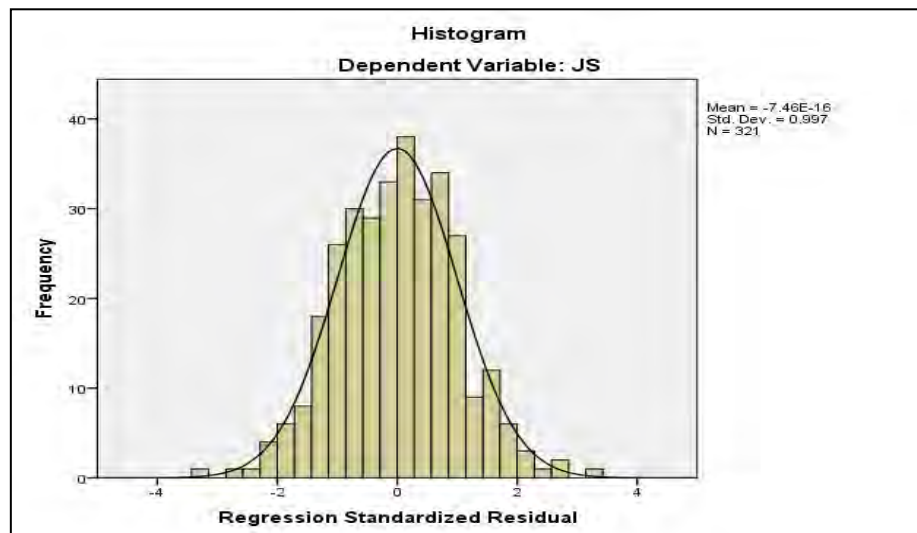


Figure 4.1: Histogram of residual distribution of all variables

#### 4.4 Response Bias

As discussed in Chapter 3, 450 questionnaires were distributed. Three hundred and twenty-two employees working in 5-star hotels of Langkawi Island of Malaysia had responded the survey questionnaires' for the present study. The data collection process took almost two months to complete. The return rate was sufficient, where 322 employees (72% return rate) completed and returned the questionnaires.

The examination on the questionnaires showed that all sets of questionnaires were usable. Even though the percentage of the returned rate allowed for the researcher to skip the test of response bias which had to be conducted if the response rate is lower than 70%, the researcher still conducted an analysis of response bias. This was due to the belief that bias can emanate from the instrument, interviewer, respondents, and/or the situations (Sekaran, 2000).

Table 4.3

*Independent Sample t test*

Variable	Mean		Standard Deviation	
	Early Response	Late Response	Early Response	Late Response
Superior - Subordinate Communication	3.06	2.87	.777	.765
Leader Member Exchange Quality	3.38	3.15	.522	.414
Employee Job Satisfaction	3.14	2.62	.886	.860

N=321

Levene test was used in this study to examine each metric of variable across the non-metric variables in the data set. In table 4.4 the results of Levene test were discussed.

Table 4.4 *Levene's test*

Variable		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig
Superior-Subordinate Communication	Equal variances assumed	.835	.362
	Equal variances not assumed		
Leader Member Exchange Quality	Equal variances assumed	2.778	.097
	Equal variances not assumed		
Employee Job Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.026	.872
	Equal variances not assumed		

#### 4.5 Data Cleaning and Screening

Data examination is inconsequential but an essential part of multivariate analysis. By examining the data before the application of the multivariate analysis, the present research gains several critical insights into the characteristics of the data. The discussion that follows will touch on the steps taken in data examination starting with missing data, identification of outliers and tests of assumptions underlying multivariate analysis. This will help reveal what is not apparent and portray the actual data (Hair et al. 2010).

##### 4.5.1 Missing Data

Missing data refers to an incompletely answered questionnaire because a respondent does not respond to any question or some parts of the sections (Hair et al., 2010). Missing data is a familiar problem in surveys. However, missing data needs to be treated before employing the statistical analysis techniques.



The researcher has used missing value analysis (MVA) in SPSS to identify the missing value in the data set. The reported missing values questionnaire were marked and if the missing value is more than 40% the researcher excluded the questionnaire for further analysis. Those questionnaires which have a missing value of less than 40 % were replaced with the mean value.

#### **4.5.2 Detection of Outliers**

This section discusses the method of cleaning the data through the identification of outliers. Outliers are observations with values that are a unique combination of characteristics identifiable as distinctly different from the other observations in the data set (Hair et al., 2010). Various researchers established the virtue of detecting and handling outliers using various methods. Hair et al. (2010) for example, presents clear methods used in detecting outliers in univariate, bivariate and multivariate situations based on the number of variables considered.

In examining the outliers for the present research, the practical and substantive standpoints were considered. It was practical in the sense that it looked at how the outliers could pose a marked impact on empirical analysis and substantive in light of how representative the data was of the population. Box plot analysis was conducted on each variable to examine for possible outliers and candidates for outlier designation were found. They involved case numbers 3, 9, 15, 19, 29, 34, 37, 40, 46, 47, 53, 56, 64, 67, 73, 75, 82, 89, 107, 111, 129, 132, 137, 166, 177, 178, 185, 224, 239, 248, 259 and 311. From the examination, the outliers were classified as extraordinary observations, which no explanation could be offered. Besides, they could also represent untapped elements in the population,

which was previously not identified (Hair et al., 2010). Some of the observations were rather extreme as they stood out of the acceptable range of distribution. For this, the decision was then made to delete the outliers and clean the data to enable for multivariate analysis to be conducted. The following section discusses the final step in data examination. It involves testing the assumptions underlying the statistical bases for multivariate analysis.

#### **4.5.3 Normality**

Following assessment of missing data and outlier detection, normality of data distribution is assessed. Thus, normality of data means the data distribution which basically is a primary assumption in multivariate analysis. It can be measured based on the variation from a normal distribution but if large enough then statistical tests are invariably not valid (Hair et al., 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The statistical method can assess the normality of the data Skewness and Kurtosis test and Kolmogorov and Shapiro methods were used by the researcher to test the normality of the data distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). This research applied SPSS for descriptive statistics to identify Skewness and Kurtosis (refer table 4.5). All variables were found to be normally distributed (refer to figure 4.1 and table 4.5).

#### **4.5.4 Skewness and Kurtosis**

Before further discussion on the tests of normality takes place, the researcher will present the skewness and kurtosis scores of each variable. While skewness describes the balance of the distribution (if the outliers on the positive end of the distribution are negatively affecting the accuracy of the mean), kurtosis refers to the “peakness” or “flatness” of the distribution. The skewness and kurtosis of a normal distribution

are given values below zero. In the descriptive analysis of the variables it was suggested that skewness values should fall outside the range of  $\pm 1.96$  to indicate an acceptable distribution (Palant, 2010). Allen et al. (2009) on the other hand, suggested that skewness and kurtosis statistic should be less than two or less than twice the standard error of skewness or kurtosis. Table 4.5 presents the value of the skewness and kurtosis scores of each variable.

Table 4.5  
*Skewness and Kurtosis*

Variable	N	Mean	Skewness	Std. Error	Kurtosis	Std. Error
Superior - Subordinate Communication	321	3.03	-.172	.136	-.400	.271
Leader Member Exchange Quality	321	3.35	.031	.136	.516	.271
Employee Job Satisfaction	321	3.06	-.320	.136	-.587	.271

From the above table, it is shown that superior-subordinate communication, and employee job satisfaction were slightly negatively skewed, with scores of -.172 and -.320 respectively. In large samples, a variable with statistically significant skewness often does not deviate enough from normality to make a substantive difference in the analysis. In a large sample, the impact of departure from zero kurtosis also diminishes. In general, the distribution of skewness and kurtosis values were within the acceptable value of  $\pm 1.96$  that confirms the normal distribution of data.

#### 4.5.5 Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

In further testing for normality of each variable, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was administered on each variable to assess the normality of the distribution of scores. The test revealed all variables yielded significant values with  $p < 0.05$ . This is

consistent with Pallant (2013) suggestion that it is very rare to have an insignificant Kolmogorov-Smirnov value with large samples of more than 200. Table 4.6 shows the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test conducted on each variable.

Table 4.6

*Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Superior - Subordinate Communication	.046	321	.047	.992	321	.014
Leader Member Exchange Quality	.060	321	.007	.993	321	.024
Employee Job Satisfaction	.085	321	.000	.979	321	.000

df = degree of freedom, sig. = significance.

#### 4.5.6 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity happens when there is solid and strong correlation between two or more variables in the framework. Obviously, a high level of multicollinearity will increase the standard errors of the beta-coefficients and will create a danger to the framework which can be challenging and problematic to multivariate analysis. Multicollinearity can be recognized by checking the correlation matrix for high correlation (for example,  $>.80$ ). In this study, all values were greater than 0.8. Additional method to analyze multicollinearity is to check the variance inflation factor (VIF) and collinearity diagnostics of tolerance statistics. If VIF is greater than 10 and the tolerance is below than 0.1, a serious problem is indicated. In this study, there is no value greater than 10.

Table 4.7

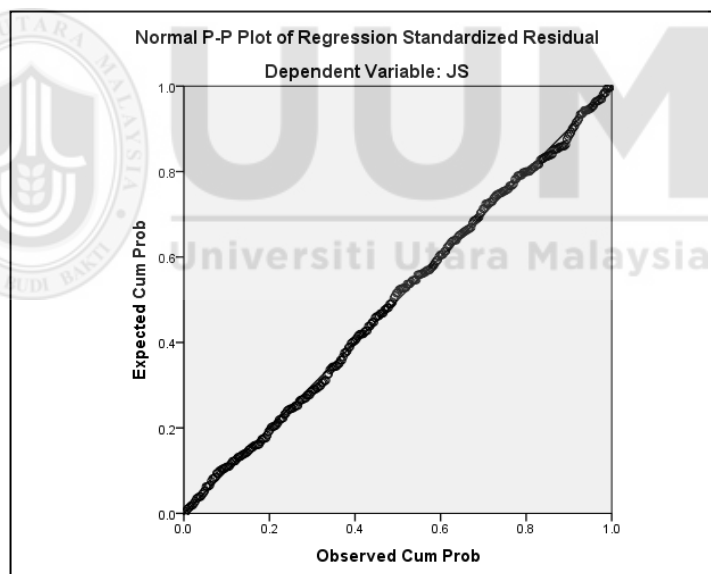
*Multicollinearity*

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Condition Index
Superior - Subordinate Communication	.738	1.354	9.422
Leader Member Exchange Quality	.692	1.275	16.761

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

#### 4.6 Linearity

As stated by Hair et al. (2010) it is crucial for a researcher to examine the relationships between variables to identify the departures from linearity that may affect correlation because correlations represent only the linear association between variables. This would also mean that the nonlinear effects will be presented in the correlation value. For that matter, the researcher conducted a linearity test to measure the relationships among the variables that might have a linear relationship. Based on a linear regression analysis among variables, with adjustment being the dependent variable, the results showed the presence of linear relationship among the dependent and independent variables. Figure 4.2 displays the normal p-p plot of regression standardized residual.

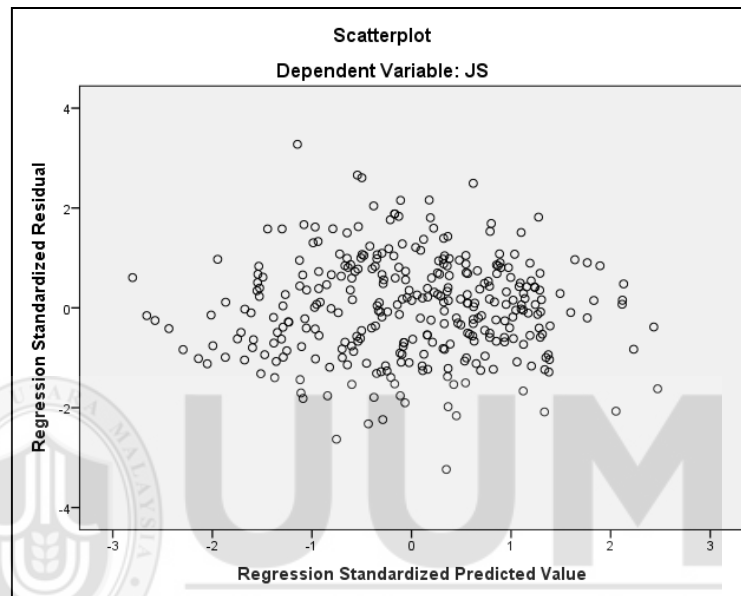


*Figure 4.2: Normal Probability Plot*

#### 4.7 Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity can be defined as the level of homogeneity of variance that assumes dependent variable show equal levels of variance across the range of predictor variables (Hair et al., 2014). Therefore, the normality is assumed and expected because when the multivariate normality assumption is met, then the

relationship between the variables is homoscedasticity (Field, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Thus, homoscedasticity can also be assessed graphically in figure 4.3, as well as statistically (Hair et al., 2014). Firstly, visual scatter plots are formed for a reasonable level of homoscedasticity. The data is scattered evenly around the horizontal line of the plots and does not show any concerns about heteroscedasticity.



*Figure 4.3: Homoscedasticity*

#### **4.8 Reliability and Validity Tests**

Since the measurement of variables is an integral part of any empirical research, this section is devoted to a discussion on the accuracy of measures which depends on its reliability and validity. As for the pilot test, the reliability test for the present research was conducted by calculating the Cronbach's co-efficient alpha. This was done for two reasons: (1) to test the ability of the instruments which can yield the same results when repeated; and (2) to identify that there was no error in measurement and that the same test would yield high consistency level every time the instrument was administered, regardless of time, place and samples (Burleson & Waltman, 1988). According to Hair et al. (2010), the correlation value of  $<0.6$  is

weak, 0.6 - <0.7 is average, 0.7 to 0.8 is good, 0.8 to 0.9 is very good and 0.9 is excellent and consistent in measuring the variables under study. Clearly, any summated scale should be analyzed for its reliability to ensure that it was appropriate before proceeding to validity assessment. In testing the validity, factor analysis was used in testing whether the items in each variable were in the right factor. The researcher followed the same process in testing the reliability and validity values of each variable.

#### 4.8.1 Reliability Tests

Table 4.8 displays the alpha values of all variables being studied. Results of the reliability analysis for the measures used in the present research indicated that Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0.81 to 0.92 for all variables, thus displaying acceptable levels of internal consistency. For the overall superior - subordinate communication, the alpha value was .91 and the value proved that the instrument employed by the study was appropriate. While the leader member exchange quality revealed an alpha value of .81 and the alpha value for employee job satisfaction scored .92 on the reliability test. The results indicated that all instruments employed by the present research were appropriate and acceptable as the scales employed by the present research did not reveal any problems of reliability.

Table 4.8

#### *Reliability Test*

No.	Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	Superior - Subordinate Communication	0.910
2.	Leader Member Exchange Quality	0.816
3.	Employee Job Satisfaction	0.926

#### 4.8.2 Factor Analysis

Factor analysis methods are often used for data reduction, which takes a number of different variables and attempts to discover any essential dimensions at which variables may be present (Pallant, 2005). The set of variables created in this analysis demonstrate the relationship of variables to the factor. This data reduction is achieved by looking for variables that correlate highly with a group of other variables, but do not correlate with variables outside that group (Field, 2009). Furthermore, factor analysis offers the tools for scrutinizing and analyzing the arrangement of the interrelationships (correlations) among large number of variables by defining sets of variables that are highly interrelated, identified as factors (Hair et al., 2010). Basically, factor analysis can be used to understand the structure of a set of variables, construct a questionnaire to measure any underlying variables and reduce a data set to a more manageable size and at the same time retain the original information (Field, 2009).

Table 4.9

*Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test KMO and Bartlett's Test*

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.840
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	4831.961
Df	27.51
Sig.	.000

Table 4.9 indicates that the Bartlett test of Sphericity is significant, and that the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is far greater than .6. Thus, a statistically significant Bartlett's test of Sphericity is greater than 5 which indicate that satisfactory correlation exists among the variables to proceed (Hair et al., 2014).



#### 4.8.3 Scree Plot

The numbers of extraction factors are recognized by eigenvalues, while scree plot is predominantly used to check the maximum number of factors by examining the graph. Fundamentally, a scree plot extracts the optimum number of factors before the amount of unique variance starts to dominate the common variance structure (Cattell, 1966). According to Hair et al., (2010), “the screen test is derived by plotting the latent roots against the number of factors in their order of extraction, and the shape of the resulting curve is used to evaluate the cut off point” (p.110). “Usually the scree plot negatively decreases; the eigenvalue is highest for the first factor and reasonable but decreasing for the following few factors before getting small values for the last several factors” (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p.644). As a result, the number of factors based on a screen plot test on data is confirmed as the same with extracted factors through eigenvalues presented above.

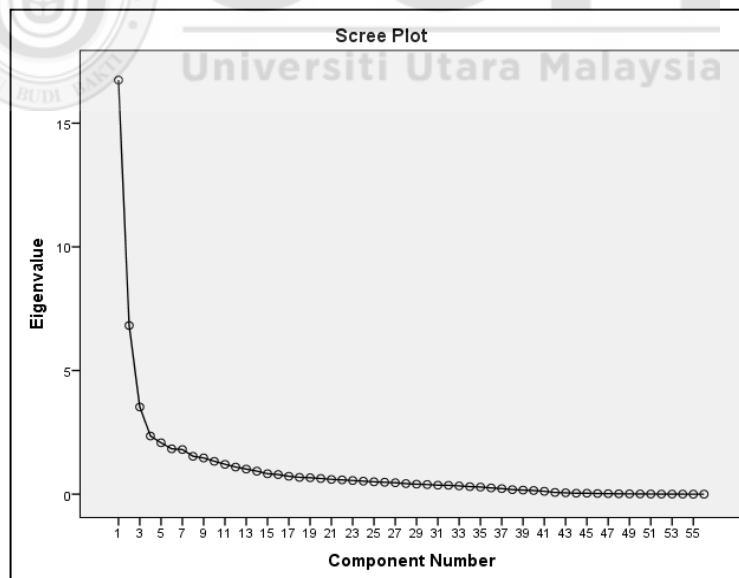


Figure 4.4: Scree Plot

Table 4.10

*Factor Loadings of Upward Openness Communication*

Variable	Items	Loadings
UOC1	I question my supervisor's instructions when I don't understand them	.816
UOC2	I tell my supervisor when I think things are being done wrong	.891
UOC3	I question my supervisor's instructions when I think they are wrong	.892
UOC4	I make suggestion to my superior about how the work could be done	.897
UOC5	I think my superior asks for my suggestion about how work tasks could be done	.866
UOC6	I tell my superior about my work problems	.639

Factor 1- Upward openness communication (UOC): This factor includes Upward openness communication between superior and subordinate. Six items scale was applied, and the items loaded in the same factor, which is above 0.4 (Cohen et al., 2007) and no single item was deleted.

Table 4.11

*Factor loading for Positive Relationship Communication*

Variable	Items	Loadings
PRC1	I think my superior jokes good naturedly with me	.640
PRC2	I think that my superior asks for my suggestions about how each work task could be done	.647
PRC3	I think that my superior asks for my suggestions about how each work task could be done	.670
PRC4	I think my superior seeks my input on important decisions	.685
PRC5	I think my superior strikes up casual conversations with me	.716
PRC6	I think my superior asks me for suggestions for improvements in my group	.660

Factor 2-Positive Relationship Communication (PRC): This factor comprises what motivate superior-subordinate communication and make healthy employee job satisfaction. The six-item scale was applied, and the items loaded in the same factor, which is above 0.4 (Cohen et al., 2007) and no any item was deleted.

Table 4.12

*Factor loading for Negative Relationship Communication*

Variable	Items	Loadings
NRC1	I think my superior ridicules or make fun of me	.753
NRC2	I think my superior criticizes my work in front of others	.650
NRC3	I think my superior is critical of me as a person	.811
NRC4	I think my superiors asks me to do thing rather than tells me	.788
NRC5	I think my superior tells me how they discipline worker	.729
NRC6	I think my superior admits to their mistakes	.596

Factor 4-Negative Relationship Communication (NOC): This factor encompasses the link between negative relationship communication and job satisfaction. A six items scale was used thus, all the items loaded in the same factor, which is above 0.4 (Cohen et al., 2007), similarly no any item was deleted.

Table 4.13

*Factor loading for Job relevant communication*

Variable	Items	Loadings
JRC1	I think my superior gives me recognition for good work	.756
JRC2	I think my superior lets me know why changes are made in work assignments	.655
JRC3	I think my superior keeps me informed about rules and policies	.808
JRC4	I think my superior gives clear instructions to me	.787
JRC5	I think my superior informs me about future for me in the group	.726
JRC6	I think my superior tells me the reasons for work schedules	.593

Factor 5- Job relevant communication (JRC): This factor contains Job relevant communication items. A 6-item scale was applied to measure, Therefore, all the items loaded in the same factor, which is above 0.4 (Cohen et al., 2007), and no item was removed.

Table 4.14

*Factor loading for Leader Member Exchange Quality*

Variable	Items	Loadings
LMXQ1	I like my superior very much as a person	.652
LMXQ2	I think my superior is the kind of person I would like to have as a friend	.718
LMXQ3	I think my superior is a lot of fun to work with	.769
LMXQ4	I think my superior defends my work actions to a superior, even without complete knowledge	.660
LMXQ5	I think my superior would defend me if I were “attacked” by others	.870

LMXQ6	I carry out work tasks for my superior that go beyond what is specified in my job description	.586
LMXQ7	I carry out work tasks for my superior that go beyond what is specified in my job description	.715
LMXQ8	I carry out work tasks for my superior that go beyond what is specified in my job description	.701
LMXQ9	I do not mind working my hardest for my superior	.781
LMXQ10	I am impressed with my superior's knowledge of their job	.730
LMXQ11	I respect my superior's knowledge of and competency on the job	.698
LMXQ12	I admire my superior's professional skills	.683

Factor 1- LMXQ: This factor covers LMX quality for employee job satisfaction. Twelve items were applied based on numerous literature review from related area No item was deleted because the score is above than 0.4 (Cohen, Manion & Marrison, 2007).

Table 4.15

*Factor loading for Job Satisfaction*

Variable	Items	Loadings
JS1	I am being able to keep busy all of the time	.988
JS2	I get the chance to work alone on the job	.978
JS3	I get chance to do different things from time to time	.986
JS4	I get chance to be 'somebody' in the community	.969
JS5	I like way my boss handles his/her workers	.585
JS6	I like competence of my supervisor in making decisions	.601
JS7	I am being able to do things that don't go against my conscience	.734
JS8	I like way my job provides for steady employment	.660
JS9	I get chance to do things for other people	.770
JS10	I get chance to tell people what to do	.730
JS11	I get chance to do something that makes use of my abilities	.721
JS12	I like the way hotel policies are put into practice	.956
JS13	I like my pay and the amount of work that I do	.948
JS14	The chances for advancement on this job	.911
JS15	I get the freedom to use my own Judgment	.913
JS16	I get the chance to try my own methods of doing the job	.913
JS17	I like the working conditions	.919
JS18	I like the way my co-workers get along with each other	.526
JS19	I get the praise for doing a good job	.546
JS20	I like the feeling of accomplishment I get from the job	.876

Factor 6- EJS: This factor covers employee job satisfaction in the hotel industry. Twenty items were applied based on numerous literature review from related area No item was deleted because the score is above than 0.4 (Cohen, Manion & Marrison, 2007).

#### 4.9 Hypotheses Testing

Multiple regressions were utilized to test hypotheses developed in the previous chapter. Multiple regression analysis using Enter Methods were applied with the confidence level of 95 percent ( $p < 0.05$ ) were adapted (Pallant, 2013).

Overall, two hypotheses were developed to be tested. Results of regression analysis to test these hypotheses is established in Table 4.16. Overall, it can be found in Table 4.16 that SSC and LMXQ explained 60.5 percent variance in EJS ( $R^2 = 0.605$ ,  $F = 361.392$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Both indicators were also found to have significant relationship with employee job satisfaction.

Therefore, the hypotheses were found to be significantly related which indicated that the objective of the study had been achieved and research questions were statistically answered.

Table 4.16

*Hypotheses Testing*

Direct Effects			$\beta$	S.E.	t	$\rho$	Status
SSC	→	EJS	.457	.024	16.039	***	Significant
LMXQ	→	EJS	.577	.036	20.228	***	Significant
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>			<b>0.605</b>				
F			361.392				
Sig.			0.000				

Superior Subordinate Communication (SSC), Leader Member Exchange Quality (LMXQ), Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS)

\*\*\*Significance at the level of 0.001.

- 1) **H1**: There is a significant relationship between superior - subordinate communication and employees' job satisfaction.

As presented previously, hypothesis (H1) explains the relationship between the superior subordinate communication and employees' job satisfaction. Thus, as indicated in Table 4.16, the hypothesized relationship was found to be significant (p-value = .000, t-statistics = 16.039). Therefore, this hypothesis is supported.

2) **H2**: There is a significant relationship between LMX quality and employees' job satisfaction.

The hypothesis (H2) explains the relationship between LMX quality and employees' job satisfaction. As shown in Table 4.16 the hypothesized relationship was found to be statistically significant (p-value = .000, t-statistics = 20.228). Therefore, this hypothesis is found to be supportive.

Table 4.17  
*Hypothesis Testing Summary*

No.	Hypothesis	Status
H1	There is a relationship between superior subordinate communication employee job satisfaction.	Supported
H2	There is a relationship between leader member exchange quality employee job satisfaction.	Supported

.

The result presented in Table 4.16 reveals the result of multiple regression which can be represented by ( $F = 361.392$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). This indicates that the model is statistically significant. Furthermore, the  $R^2$  value ( $R^2 = 0.605$ ) also indicates that the model is fit and acceptable with regards to the argument proffered by Hair et al. (2010) which assert that a model with  $R$  squared value greater than 0.10 is considered fit. The result also implies that the independent variables (superior-subordinate communication, LMX quality) collectively explain 60% of the variation of the dependent variable (employee job satisfaction).

#### **4.10 Chapter Summary**

This study presents a picture of superior - subordinate communication and LMX quality on employee job satisfaction. Thus, the literature and the results of this research suggest that there is a relationship between superior-subordinate communication and LMX quality on employee job satisfaction. Furthermore, in this chapter, normality of responses was shown. The Skewness and Kurtosis table was presented, and the employees' demographic characteristics were described in detail. Even though some items were dropped, and outliers were deleted to ensure the normality of the data, the results demonstrated a good level of reliability and average variance extraction that took place for each construct.

The assessment of the framework and testing of the hypotheses was undertaken at the final stage of the regression analysis. Thus, the results indicated a good fit of the framework, and beta values were found significant. The framework demonstrated that both hypotheses H1 and H2 were statistically significant. As conclusion, this chapter has presented and elaborated the research findings of the study. The next chapter will discuss the theoretical contributions and practical implications of the findings.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the discussion of the research findings grounded on research questions, objectives, theory and literature review. Additionally, this current chapter also saw the practical and hypothetical suggestions of this study. The chapter also highlights the research boundaries and finally the recommendations for forthcoming research will be discussed.

#### **5.2 Overview of the Study**

The foremost determination of this study was to explore the relationships of superior-subordinate communication, LMX quality on employee job satisfaction in the setting of hotel industry of Malaysia. It similarly attempted to categorize the aspects of superior - subordinate communication, which improves employee job satisfaction. The theoretical model offered show direct relationships between all the variables.

The study hoped to achieve two objectives which are stated and formulated according to the research questions developed from the problem statement in the preceding chapters. The study involved non-managerial employees attached to the Malaysian hotel industry. The employees working in 5-star hotels in Langkawi Island, Malaysia, were selected for the contemporary study. An overall of 450 survey forms were disseminated through a droplet and gathers technique. The data gathering procedure took nearly 60 days to complete as the investigator composed the data



from nine 5-star hotels located in Langkawi. The reoccurrence rate was adequate, where three hundred and twenty-two finalized and returned the surveys, making the respond rates of 71%.

The collected responses were evaluated through SPSS 24.0. The framework of this study was supported by LMX theory which assumed that individual and organizational outcomes are the output of better superior - subordinate communication

### **5.3 Discussion of the Research Findings**

This section provides a detailed argument on the empirical evidence of the findings for the present study. It starts with a evaluation of the research results tracked by an in-depth deliberation and justification of the findings. Based on a theoretically-driven operational model, the two research hypotheses were tested. Results from the analysis had successfully supported the hypotheses tested. Elaborations of the findings led towards accomplishing the research objectives.

#### **5.3.1 Relationship Between Superior - Subordinate Communication and Job Satisfaction**

The first objective of this study was to investigate the relationship of superior-subordinate communication with employee job satisfaction. To support the first objective of the study direct hypotheses (H1) were hypothesized. The current study proves that superior - subordinate communication has significant relationship towards employee job satisfaction in the context of hotel industry. The finding suggests that good communication between a supervisor and a subordinate will result in greater job satisfaction, as some subordinate focuses on his or her job

performances in a positive manner, thus resulting in greater productivity and punctuality in service. This proves that communication between supervisor-subordinate is tied directly to employee job satisfaction.

The present study supports previous findings by Dawson, Madera, Neal, and Chen (2014) who found that effective supervisor-subordinate communication significantly effects employees' job satisfaction. Furthermore Lam, Huang, and Snape (2007); and Volmer, Niessen, Spurk, Linz, and Able (2011) have found that solid and encouraging supervisor-employee relationships can increase job satisfaction. Furthermore, when employees practice unproductive communication, they are expected to show better intention to quit their professions (De Vries, Bakker-Pieper, & Oostenveld, 2010). In the similar context Sager, Wallace, Jarrett, & Richey (2015) expostulate that unproductive communication by bosses is supposed to be a mutual problem faced by many companies with respect to retaining their employees.

The quality of relationship between superior and subordinate particularly the supervisory communication behavior, continuous to display strong analytical authority in organizational effectiveness. It is, consequently important for managers to consider communication practices as part of any effort to improve their subordinate's job satisfaction. For practicing managers, these results indicate the communication relationship that they have with their subordinates is critical and perhaps affects their working relationship. This in return will give rise to employee job satisfaction.

However, study findings suggest superior - subordinate communication has significant effect on employee to get better job satisfaction and help them to grow

healthier relationship with their managers. The outcome of this study reveals and supports the idea that the relationship between a supervisor and subordinate can be determined by their communication exchanges (Graen, et al.1972). An individual's satisfaction at work may be influenced by communication interaction he or she experiences. The results are also in line with Timm (1978) who stated effective communication with a supervisor can be fulfilling and such interactions can provide information that reduces uncertainty about one's present or future conditions at work. Therefore, the more effectively supervisors communicate with their staff, the better the output is attained.

The results indicated a positive relationship between perceived supervisor subordinate communication and employee job satisfaction. These findings indicate that the communication between supervisor-subordinate is tied directly to employee job satisfaction. In the Malaysian hotel industry, whereby, high turnover among the employees is a problem, this study shed light on superior - subordinate communication which may improve job satisfaction level and result to lower the turnover rate. Thus, the findings of the study clearly indicated that employees' job satisfaction receive positive impact due to superior - subordinate communication.

### **5.3.2 Relationship between LMX Quality and Employee Job Satisfaction**

The second objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between LMX quality and employee job satisfaction. The results of the present study confirm the hypothesis (H2) of positive relationship between LMX quality and employee job satisfaction. The result highlights a strong, and significant relationship between the two constructs. These finding are also in line with previous research indicating the importance of LMX quality and its impact on employee job satisfaction (Epitropaki

& Martin, 2005). The supervisors tend to develop and maintain LMX relationships with their subordinates that vary in quality. LMX quality indicates that subordinates in high-quality LMX relationships received and reported more favorable outcomes than their peers who were in low quality LMX relationships (Dansereau et al., 1975).

This result agrees with the findings of Golden and Veiga (2008) which demonstrated a positive correlation between LMX and job satisfaction. Likewise, Liden et al. (1997) revealed a strong positive relationship between LMX and job satisfaction. Several patterns and relationship emerged from this study. This study supported the relationships among the variables of supervisor-subordinate communication, LMX quality and employee job satisfaction. The results of the relationships tested were consistent with what was predicted. As expected, the quality of LMX communication among supervisors and subordinates was correlated to job satisfaction of employee. It is very important for the leader to understand the significance of employee job satisfaction. The reason for the current study was to develop this area of research to gain a better understanding of how the quality of supervisor-subordinate relationships may influence job satisfaction in the hotel industry.

In general, the current study indicates that good communication between a leader and subordinate will result in greater job satisfaction, as subordinate focuses on his or her job performances in a positive manner, thus resulting in greater productivity and promptness in service.

The results corroborate the findings of a large amount of previous work on LMX. Epitropaki and Martin (2005) and Gerstner and Day (1997) suggested that

high LMX quality improves employee job satisfaction and such employee shows positive attitude towards their job and workplace as compared to those employees who are experiencing low LMX quality treatment from their superiors.

The discussions presented above indicated that both the hypotheses have been tested and research questions have been answered. Thus, the objectives of the study have been achieved.

#### **5.4 Implications of the Study**

It is expected that the results of this research will assist in further understanding of supervisor-subordinate relationship from a hotel industry perspective. The current study aids in providing theoretical and practical advantages to both the hospitality practitioners and academics.

##### **5.4.1 Theoretical Implications**

Through this research, few theoretical contributions have been addressed. The first main contribution is towards the development of leader member exchange theory. LMX concerns itself with the way in which superiors and subordinates interact within an organization. The theory calls attention to the idea that actions and behaviors of the superior may have a long-lasting effect on the relationship with a subordinate. Namely, high LMX tends to be related with strong, respectful relationships between superiors and subordinates, while low LMX tends to be associated with negative attitudes and low levels of respect and authority of superiors. Some areas that LMX may be lacking in research revolve in-depth study of superior-subordinate relationships and subordinates' expectation of their relationships.

The purpose of this study was to examine whether there were opposing expectations from subordinates to superiors, and the results were interpreted, and it was found that subordinates sought to guarantee that their expectations were being met. The findings of this study can help to elaborate on LMX concepts regarding a subordinate's expectation of the relationship since the results strengthen LMX while demonstrating superior-subordinate communication relationship with job satisfaction.

While LMX research has looked at the communicative relationship from a subordinate's perspective, it currently looks at communication expectations held by subordinates regarding the ongoing relationship. Because this study sought out subordinates' expectations, it allows for LMX to consider interpersonal and communicative expectations from subordinates regarding their superiors entering the relationship.

The researcher interpreted the results which is consequential for LMX on several grounds. Firstly, subordinates in this study reinforced LMX concepts such as having high and low exchanges. During the study, participants shared stories that demonstrated that high and low exchanges do take place with superiors depending on the relationship. Furthermore, current research allowed for the researcher to define positive versus negative relationships using LMX. This study opens the possibility for LMX to be observed from a different point of view and what it is that subordinates expect prior to a relationship being established.

Finally, understanding what this study can contribute to the field of communication is substantially important. From the communication perspective, this study shows that communication is one of the keys in creating a positive or negative relationship. Through communication, a superior can meet a subordinate's expectations and ensure a strong and successful relationship, at the same time a supervisor may also risk having a tumultuous relationship marked with inefficiency and resentment. Since communication is a crucial component of the superior-subordinate relationship, it is important to understand what methods of communication are linked to highly positive relationships. Positive relationships were described by the participants as consisting of open two-way communication and clear communication of expectations. The researcher understood these methods of communication to be linked with higher levels of mutual respect which is in turn linked to positive relationships. It would be important for the scholarly field to continue to understand the methods that can assist in creating mutual respect between superiors and subordinates.

#### **5.4.2 Practical Implications**

This research has provided useful and reliable information for future research. Additionally, this research also helps employers to figure out the significance of superior - subordinate communication regarding job satisfaction, so that, managers can provide better quality communication to increase employee level of job satisfaction in the hotel industry. While the implications for the theoretical field are important, the practical implications for this study can change the way in which hotel management treat and respond to their workforce. Studying in detail the roles of superiors, this research would be helpful in knowing what subordinates expected

out of supervisors and their relationship, and that is one benefit that this study can provide, particularly in the vein of LMX research, which study relationships. In addition, this research can also be used to determine the efficacy of hotel industry.

Furthermore, this research might be useful in HR practices. This research could be a guideline or reference for employers to increase employee job satisfaction and their performances. For example, from this research, employers can improve their knowledge on factors affecting employees in the hotel industry. Therefore, by improving employee job satisfaction, organizations can become more successful in the future. Moreover, this research enables employers to clearly understand the factors that can enhance performance, which is an area that employers should prioritize in their organization.

The final expectation of subordinates is supportive communication. When it comes to communication, superiors need to know that subordinates want and expect to have supportive communication. Superiors should be willing to talk with subordinates as well as listen to them. By engaging in collaborative communication, superiors and subordinates both get to partake in the communication process which can link to higher levels of respect. If all superiors were to engage in collaborative communication, it may help to ensure that relationships from both sides remain open and respectful.

Overall, organizational leaders have an opportunity to learn from this study and its findings to help prepare superiors for relationships with older subordinates. If leaders understand the expectations that subordinates have, they can meet those



expectations from the beginning rather than trying to change an already established dynamic.

## **5.5 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

Despite the noteworthy contributions discoursed above, this study as well has its own boundaries. Therefore, this segment will discourse several limits, and this will then be tailed by the recommendations for forthcoming research.

### **5.5.1 Limitations**

Firstly, the purpose of the present research is limited to investigating the relationship among superior - subordinate communication, LMX quality and employee job satisfaction. Thus, other variables that likely to influence the relationships among these variables are not examined. For example, this research does not quantity conservational aspects such as organizational values and environment that may affect the superior - subordinate communication and enhance employee job satisfaction.

Furthermore, this research also has boundaries in its statistical procedures and statistics as it only observed at one specific trade (i.e. hotel). This study employs only a quantitative methodology. While it is appropriate and suffices to meet the research objective, deeper understanding on the findings through in-depth interviews is not covered.

Finally, the scope of the study has been narrowed down to the 5-star hotels, specifically one in a given situational context. Therefore, the findings may not be applicable to other hotels from 3-star, 4-star and 5-star hotels. Also, due to the

limitations of period and economic funds, the population of this study are also restricted to employee situated in Langkawi Island, Malaysia. Hence, the findings of the present study are limited to employees in 5-star hotels of Langkawi only. The findings from other parts of Malaysia may differ. Therefore, the empirical evidence from this study may not be generalized to other categories of hotels or other states in Malaysia. Nevertheless, hotel industries in Malaysia that share the same values and culture may benefit from the findings, especially 5-star hotels in Malaysia.

This exploratory thesis has provided a variety of information concerning supervisor-subordinate communication, LMX quality, and how all these may affect employee job satisfaction. Even though, much has been left for further probing, the main purpose of the current study has been accomplished.

## **5.6 Recommendations for Future Research**

In essence, the main recommendations from this study are related to the dynamic role of effective supervisor-subordinate communication in the progressions of job satisfaction of hotel employees. Future research should be done by conducting the survey in hotels of different states to improve the reliability and accuracy of data. Thus, future research can target a bigger sample and the questionnaire can be distributed to more hotels in other states of Malaysia. Whereby the data obtained from the different states will generate better outcomes which can be considered more accurate and comprehensive.

Policy-makers and senior management in the hotel industry need to consider and understand the aspect of superior - subordinate communication. The findings in this present study suggest that effective supervisor-subordinate communication and

LMX quality are related to each other and influence the organizational outcomes and enhance employee job satisfaction.

### **5.7 Summary of the Study**

The discussions in this final chapter began with the overview of the research which highlights the objectives, methods and results of the study. This is followed by a lengthy discussion on the results which elaborate the findings in detail. Justifications and explanations of the outcomes of the study are provided. The implications of the study are also discussed. This study proves the importance of clear and effective superior - subordinate communication that needs to take place in the hotel industry. Since many people work for over half of their life, trying to attain job satisfaction from their work, it is vital to consider and understand the importance of employee job satisfaction for the employees as well as organizational success. It is hoped that the study will be a step further in enhancing our understanding of superior-subordinate communication in the hotel industry.

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## Appendix A Questionnaire



The relationship of superior subordinate communication and LMX quality with employee job satisfaction in Malaysia hotel industry at Langkawi, Kedah

Greetings,

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is **Sanan Waheed Khan** and I am a Master, Candidate (Communication), School of Multimedia Technology & Communication, College of Arts and, Universiti Utara Malaysia. I am investigating, The relationship of superior subordinate communication and LMX quality with employee job satisfaction in the Malaysia hotel industry at Langkawi, Kedah. Your assistance as a respondent is very important because it can greatly help advance academic knowledge. Below is some necessary information and instructions.

Participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time, and you do not have to answer any questions with which you feel uncomfortable. A final copy of the report will also be available upon request.

All information collected during the research will remain **CONFIDENTIAL**. It will be used for academic purposes only.

I shall be grateful if you could complete the enclosed questionnaires.

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

SANAN WAHEED KHAN

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## **SECTION A**

### **1.0 Demographic Profile**

Please tick (/) the appropriate box to answer the questions.

#### **1. Gender**

☐ Male ☐ Female

#### **2. Marital Status**

☐ Married ☐ Unmarried

#### **3. Age**

☐ Less than 20 years

☐ 21 -30

☐ 31-40

☐ 41-50

☐ More than 50 years

#### **4. Job status**

☐ Manager ☐ Worker



INSTRUCTION: Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements by indicating your appropriate response based on the following scale.  
(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = somewhat agree; 5 = strongly agree)

**Section B: Superior-Subordinate Communication**

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	Strongly Agree
<b>Positive Relationship Communication</b>						
1	I think my superior jokes good naturedly with me	1	2	3	4	5
2	I think that my superior asks for my suggestions about how each work task could be done	1	2	3	4	5
3	I think my superior asks me about my interests outside of work	1	2	3	4	5
4	I think my superior seeks my input on important decisions	1	2	3	4	5
5	I think my superior strikes up casual conversations with me	1	2	3	4	5
6	I think my superior asks me for suggestions for improvements in my group	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Upward Openness Communication</b>						
7	I question my supervisor's instructions when I don't understand them	1	2	3	4	5
8	I tell my supervisor when I think things are being done wrong	1	2	3	4	5
9	I question my supervisor's instructions when I think they are wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I make a suggestion to my superior about how the work could be done	1	2	3	4	5
11	I think my superior asks for my suggestion about how work tasks could be done	1	2	3	4	5
12	I tell my superior about my work problems	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Negative Relationship Communication</b>						

13	I think my superior ridicules or make fun of me	1	2	3	4	5
14	I think my superior criticizes my work in front of others	1	2	3	4	5
15	I think my superior is critical of me as a person.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I think my superiors asks me to do thing rather than tells me	1	2	3	4	5
17	I think my superior tells me how they discipline worker	1	2	3	4	5
18	I think my superior admits to their mistakes	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Job Relevant Communication</b>						
19	I think my superior gives me recognition for good work	1	2	3	4	5
20	I think my superior lets me know why changes are made in work assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I think my superior keeps me informed about rules and policies	1	2	3	4	5
22	I think my superior gives clear instructions to me	1	2	3	4	5
23	I think my superior informs me about future plan for me in the group	1	2	3	4	5
24	I think my superior tells me the reasons for work schedules.	1	2	3	4	5

### Section C: LMX quality

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	Strongly Agree
1	I like my superior very much as a person	1	2	3	4	5
2	I think my superior is the kind of person I would like to have as a friend	1	2	3	4	5
3	I think my superior is a lot of fun to work with	1	2	3	4	5

4	I think my superior defends my work actions to a superior, even without complete knowledge of the issue in question	1	2	3	4	5
5	I think my superior would defend me if I were “attacked” by others	1	2	3	4	5
6	I think my superior would defend me to others in the organization if I made an honest mistake	1	2	3	4	5
7	I carry out work tasks for my superior that go beyond what is specified in my job description	1	2	3	4	5
8	I am willing to apply extra effort, beyond that normally required, to further the interest of the work group	1	2	3	4	5
9	I do not mind working my hardest for my superior	1	2	3	4	5
10	I am impressed with my superior’s knowledge of their job	1	2	3	4	5
11	I respect my superior’s knowledge of and competency on the job I	1	2	3	4	5
12	I admire my superior’s professional skills	1	2	3	4	5

#### Section D: Job Satisfaction

Note: The survey questions about this item (Section D) are reproduced by permission. Copyright 1977, Vocational Psychology Research, University of Minnesota.

(1 = Very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4 = Satisfied; 5 = Very Satisfied)

No.	Statements	Very Dissatisfied	2	3	4	Very Satisfied
1	Being able to keep busy all of the time.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The chance to work alone on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The chance to do different things from time to time.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The chance to be 'somebody' in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The way my boss handles his/her workers.	1	2	3	4	5
6	The competence of my supervisor in making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience.	1	2	3	4	5
8	The way my job provides for steady employment.	1	2	3	4	5
9	The chance to do things for other people.	1	2	3	4	5
10	The chance to tell people what to do.	1	2	3	4	5
11	The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
12	The way company policies are put into practice.	1	2	3	4	5
13	My pay and the amount of work that I do.	1	2	3	4	5
14	The chances for advancement on this job.	1	2	3	4	5
15	The freedom to use my own Judgment.	1	2	3	4	5
16	The chance to try my own methods of doing the job.	1	2	3	4	5
17	The working conditions.	1	2	3	4	5



18	The way my co-workers get along with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
19	The praise I get for doing a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
20	The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.	1	2	3	4	5

END OF THE SURVEY

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.**

